

THE BEST SELLING MAGAZINE FOR THE

AMSTRAD PCW

8000

PLUS

8256 • 8512 • 9512

What the manual doesn't tell you ...

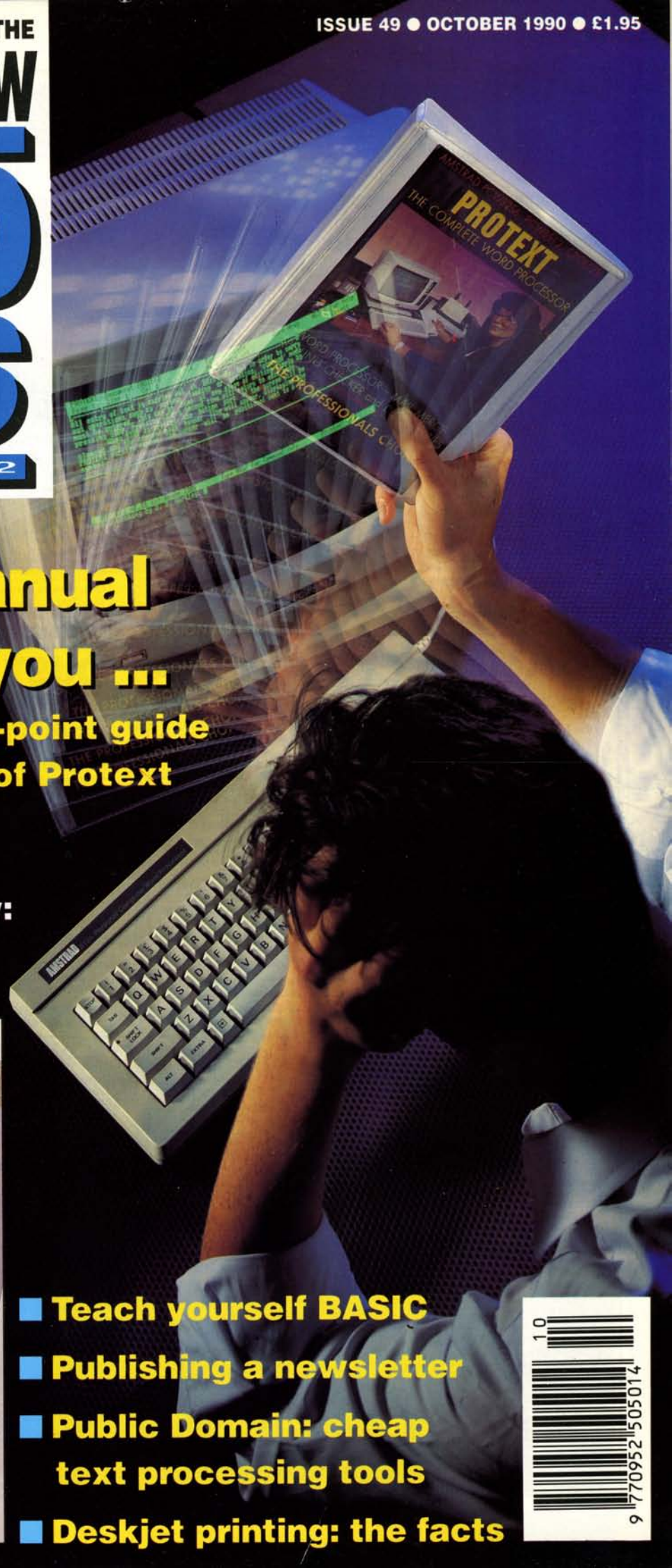
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to the inner workings of Protext

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the latest help and advice



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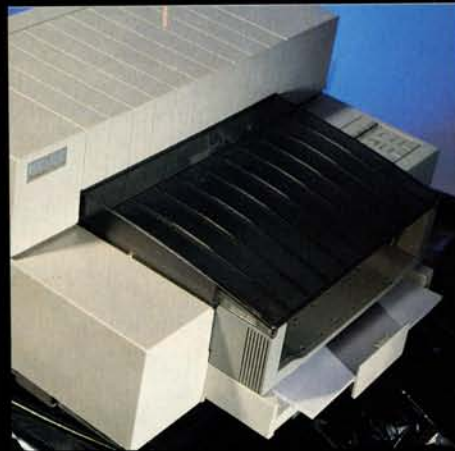
OPENING MENU



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Enter our bumper Spot the Difference competition to win a customised PCW stand or side-desk.

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ABC - Jan - June 90 - 27,021

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see also "Summer Specials"
please state which PCW model

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MasterScan is for 8256 and 8512 only. It is a good value scanner for digitising bold black & white line drawings. Please call for advice before ordering.	

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Interested in upgrading your 8256 but don't fancy DIY?

We can now offer a fitting service on FD2 disc drives and internal memory expansions for the 8256, including collection, fitting, testing and return to you by courier within seven working days.

FITTING SERVICE £35.00

Price applies to fitting either FD2, memory expansion, or both if done at the same time. Please call for further details.

PRINTERS

All of the following printers are supplied with the necessary cable for your 9512, if you have an 8256 or 8512 you will need a suitable interface, such as the SCA Professional at £49.95. A suitable cable will then be supplied to fit this.

We are happy to give our advice on printers. Please call any of the numbers shown below, during normal office hours.

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STAR LC-10 MONO.....	169.95
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With the continued release of new and innovative software packages, there is still plenty to keep the to fuel the learning thirst of many a PCW owner. Unfortunately, the promise of an exciting new release seems to be terminally let down by the inability of so many manuals to deliver their part of the bargain. Suffering at the hands of software manufacturers' literary failing is frustrating. This month, we cast the manuals aside, and take our own look at the mysteries of Protext, BASIC and LocoScript, delving into regions untouched by the official documentation.

When it comes to support acts, the role of the printer has never been more important. With the PCW now firmly established as a DTP force to be reckoned with, it is time to see how well the dot

matrix printer is equipped to meet the DTP challenge laid down by its parent machine. Inside we compare dot matrix output with that from Hewlett Packard's DeskJet, the latest in ink jet printer technology. The results, we're sure you'll agree, are very interesting.

Clarity is, we're pleased to say, in abundant evidence in many of the fanzines you've sent in to us. Take a look at our feature on page 39 to see just how a club or hobbyist's newsletter can be successfully produced. And, if your powers of observation are in peak condition, why not enter our fabulous back page competition this month - we've got 10 PCWorkstations waiting to be won. Here's to an exciting month.

Amstrad quash rumours of 'new' PCW

Industry rumours are again rife concerning the future of the PCW series of Amstrad Personal Computers. A reliable source has informed 8000 Plus that production of the 8256, 8512 and 9512 is to cease, making way for a new 'PCW' in the new year. In the meantime, Amstrad are expected to mount a major publicity campaign in the national media in order to clear existing supplies of the PCW family.

The new machine is expected to be a 3.5 inch drive version of the five year old personal computer, which will come complete with CP/M and LocoScript built into ROM (Read

Only Memory). One major manufacturer has already complained of a soaring price level for three inch drives as stocks diminish.

A spokesman for Amstrad could not deny the rumours currently circulating, but commented, "There are no plans to change the specification of the PCW; it is a very popular and successful machine which has been going for many years."

Locomotive's Howard Fisher also declined to comment, but suggested that "any enquiries should be directed to Amstrad." 8000 Plus will keep you informed of any developments.



Are the days of the Amstrad PCW - as we now know it - numbered?

New performance boosters due for release

Cirtech, famous for the much applauded Diamond hard disc, have just released two major hardware add-ons for the PCW. The first of the two, the Cirtech Sprinter, is an add-on accelerator pack for the PCW, which, claim the manufacturers, more than doubles the operating speed of all PCW software by adding a second microprocessor to the machine. This operates at nearly two and a half times the speed of the PCW's own chip.

ware, and it fits neatly onto the expansion port at the back of the machine, with no software set-up required.

In addition, Sprinter comes with an optional built-in RAM expansion pack, from an extra 256k to 1 Megabyte of internal memory. Upgrades can be added at any time, for approximately £30 per 256k of memory. The basic price for the Sprinter is £78.00.

The second release is an add-on hard

discs can be copied on to HardPak, which has the capacity to store over 2000 files and programs.

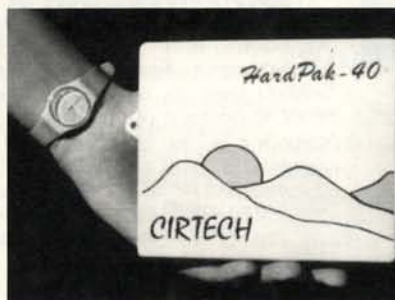
The PCW, teamed up with HardPak, can actually start up without recourse to the aid of 3 inch floppy discs. With LocoScript and CP/M installed on the HardPak, switching between the two environments is achievable more quickly than via the conventional disc-swapping procedure. The pack uses a 2.5 inch hard

disc mechanism, which means that not only does it require very little power to work, it also runs almost noiselessly. It will shut down automatically if left unused for long periods of time, re-starting as soon as it is required.

Both Cirtech's releases look set to boost the PCW's performance to hitherto unheard of levels - indeed, Cirtech claim

that the Sprinter will make the PCW run faster than a standard PC compatible.

The HardPak is available in either 20 or 40 Megabyte capacities, and costs £499 and £599 respectively. Further details are available from Cirtech on 0835 23898.



The Cirtech Sprinter, left, will double the operational speed of the PCW, while the HardPak, above, can hold over 2000 files from floppies

The increased operational speed means that all functions of the PCW work faster, from document scrolling and reformatting, to database searching. It also means that background printing no longer affects the speed of the PCW's performance. Sprinter is fully compatible with all PCW soft-

disc which simply plugs on to the PCW's expansion port. The Cirtech HardPak is a completely independent unit, requiring no cables or mains connectors. It is fully compatible with the Locomotive 'family' of software, and all standard CP/M programs.

All the data from your floppy

NEWS

by Sophie
Lankenau

Three inch move

Three Inch Software, the company behind The 9512 Rescue Kit, have moved. Mail order requests should be sent to 194 Amyland Park Road, Twickenham TW1 3HY. The new telephone number is 081 948 8694.

From the makers
of MicroDesign2 ...

PRO Scan

"Creative Technology have triumphed"
8000Plus

The Professional Hand-Held Image Scanner for the PCW

- ◆ Works on all PCW's (9512 requires external printer)
- ◆ Resolution of 200, 300 or 400 dots-per-inch
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ProSCAN comes complete with its own stand-alone control program, which includes:

- ◆ Image-file compatibility with MicroDesign2, Stop Press, Newsdesk, MasterScan, etc
- ◆ High-quality printer driving software which gives the best ever graphics printing on the PCW's own dot-matrix printer. (PCW8256/8512 only)
- ◆ Specialised drivers for producing professional-quality printing on 24-pin and laser printers (at 360 and 300 dots per inch respectively).
- ◆ Labelling facilities, using the MicroDesign2 Fonts
- ◆ Full-page Cut-and-Paste and Image Rescaling
- ◆ Comprehensive disc and file management, including disc formatting
- ◆ Powerful touching-up facilities, including brush and spray painting in nine different grey-shades
- ◆ 80-page User Manual, which includes full installation instructions

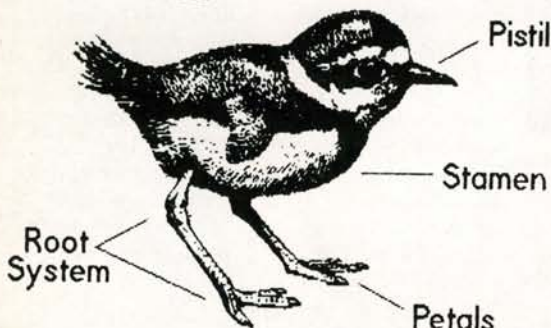


If you already own an Amstrad FAX, or a hand-held scanner for a different computer, ProSCAN may well be able to use your existing scanning head. If you are interested in buying ProSCAN to use in this way, contact us for more details.



Scanned from a colour image, lettering added, and printed on a Hewlett-Packard Deskjet PLUS printer.

A Weed-Warbler



Scanned from a line drawing, labels added, and printed using the PCW's integral dot-matrix printer.

This advert (except main photograph) was entirely designed and printed AT THIS SCALE using MicroDesign2 and ProSCAN on a PCW8512 with integral dot-matrix and HP Deskjet Plus printers

Typeface Library

Three full discs of extra typefaces for MicroDesign2 & ProSCAN, including ...

Baghdad Calligraphica celtic Seraph Schwabacher GUARDIAN
Florid Sherwood BOLDEN Scribble Rondo ... & many more!

MicroDesign2

Although only a year old, MicroDesign2 has rapidly established itself as the market leader in PCW desktop publishing:

"Without doubt, the best desktop publishing package available for the Amstrad PCW" (PCW-World)
"Knocks spots off the competition" (8000-Plus)

MicroDesign2 is also available for the PC - write or phone for details.

MICRODESIGN2 LIBRARIES

The Maps Library (two discs) comprises maps of the world and of the British Isles, including continents, global projections, and overlays for county and national boundaries.

The Parish Magazine library is ideal for MicroDesign2 users who produce a Parish magazine.

ProSCAN £179.95

Includes SCANNER, INTERFACE & SOFTWARE

MicroDesign2 £59.95

(Supplied with FREE Extra Fonts Disc No.1)

Special Offer

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Extra Fonts Discs Nos 1,2,3 ... EACH £14.95

Parish Magazine Library (2 discs)...£19.95

Maps Library (2 discs)£19.95



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CREATIVE TECHNOLOGY

Loco cashflow

The cost and the range of Locomotive's software has been undergoing something of a facelift of late. A new software 'bundle' is now available, combining LocoFile and LocoScript 2, which, say Locomotive, will be the ideal product for LocoScript 1 users with the PCW 8256/8512 machines. The price for the bundle is £44.90, which constitutes a saving of £20 on the price of the two if bought individually.

Other products are also getting together. The individual LocoFont and LocoFont 24 sets of typestyles are being combined, so that LocoFont will cover all extra typestyles for LocoScript 2 on the 8256/8512, and LocoFont 24 will cover all the typestyles for use with the 24-pin printer drivers.

The main price changes on the company's products are as follows: LocoScript 2 has gone up £5 to £29.95, LocoFile to £34.95. LocoMail is now £29.95, and LocoSpell £24.95. Bargain bundles include LocoScript 2 with LocoSpell at £39.90, and LocoFile with LocoMail at £49.90. Both these bundles allow you to save £15 on the price of the individual components purchased separately. Locomotive Software can be contacted on 0306 740606.

Formula won

The launch of BBC radio's new station, Radio 5, has brought with it a weekly programme dedicated to matters scientific and technological, entitled Formula 5. The 30-minute show is broadcast between 8.30-9.00pm every Thursday, and is aimed, according to its producer Simon Richards, at "anyone who believes that science, contrary to when it was taken at school, can be fun."

The programme will also be looking at anything which is newsworthy or exciting in the field of computer technology. Said Simon Richards, "The show will cover all kinds of computers and all kinds of applications, from games through to business. If there is anything new for PCW owners, then we will do our best to give it coverage. There are many PCW owners at the BBC, so we definitely have an interest in the subject!" he told us.

Indeed, the PCW has quite a significant role to play in the production of Formula 5. "All our scripts are prepared on the machine," said Simon, "and I can reveal that certain presenters, who ought to remain nameless, are always trying to get new games for the PCW to play in quieter moments between broadcasts!"

Formula 5 is presented by Physics

graduate and journalist Sue Nelson, someone whom Simon Richards describes as "the type of person who dreamt about flying space rockets instead of dolls when she was



If you haven't yet tuned in to Radio 5, do so to catch the new science and technology programme, Formula 5

younger." Ms Nelson also has a series on satellite television, as well as being a regular contributor to *The Sunday Times* newspaper.

The programme promises to be of interest to anyone who is remotely interested in technology, with its lively and informative approach to the subject matter. Radio 5 can be found on 603m-909m medium wave.

At your service

Business Online is a new, private Viewdata system, available to the public without subscription or time charges. The service offers wide-ranging information on business and leisure, including financial advice, teleshopping, travel, property and something rather curiously entitled 'personal services'.

The service is accessible through ordinary telephone lines using any standard CEPT level 1 Viewdata terminal, or through suitably equipped home and office computers, such as are used to access BT's Prestel network. Business Online's general manager, Danny du Plessis, claims that there is no need for any specialist computer knowledge or special jargon in order for anyone to gain access to the system. "Using ordinary telephone lines and simple terminal equipment, domestic and business users can enter

a world of information and look up the subjects they require as easily as looking through a bookshelf," he added.

You may not even have to have a telephone or computer system yourself to access the system. Business Online is currently negotiating with local authorities throughout the UK to install free terminals in libraries and shopping precincts to increase utilisation. Desktop terminals will be made available by Business Online at discounted prices, and if you advertise on the network, you will receive a terminal free of charge.

Modem-owning PCW users can have a demonstration of the service by setting their computer and modem to Prestel standard communications, and dialling 071 733 1403. For more information about how Business Online can help you, contact John Bonar on 071 738 5154.

Business Online can provide up to the minute information on any number of topics, from matters financial to teleshopping. There will also be a monthly on-line magazine to support the service

BUSINESS ONLINE		41a
PROFESSIONAL/BUSINESS		
1.	ADVERTISING AND MARKETING	
2.	BANKING, FINANCE & LAW	
3.	PROPERTY	
4.	OFFICE EQUIPMENT/SUPPLIES	
5.	BUSINESS SERVICES	
6.	COMMUNICATIONS/SECURITY	
7.	MANUFACTURING	
8.	TRANSPORT	
9.	BUSINESS & TRADE OPPORTUNITIES	
10.	REV & FOR BUSINESS INFORMATION MENU	

Prestel error

In our Comms special in the August issue of 8000 Plus, we printed an incorrect address and telephone number for Prestel. The service can be contacted at British Telecom (Prestel), Network House, Brindley Way, Apsley, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP3 9RR. The telephone number to ring is 0442 237237. Existing Prestel subscribers should 'phone the usual number.

Supercalc superdeal!

WAVE software of Cumbria are offering 8000 Plus readers an exclusive discount on Amsoft's best-selling spreadsheet, Supercalc 2. The spreadsheet usually retails at £69.95, but WAVE will be selling it at a mere £24.95 plus £3.45 for carriage.

Available for all PCWs, Supercalc 2 is the spreadsheet officially endorsed by Amstrad. For a summary of its key features, turn to this month's Good Software Guide.

The offer is effective immediately, and will continue until stocks are exhausted. So, if you want to get your hands on an excellent spreadsheet at a steal of a price, contact WAVE at 1, Buccleuch Street, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria LA14 1SR, telephone 0229 870000.

On the MAPEJ

MAPEJ, the disc copying experts from London, have moved to the rural climes of Shropshire, where their business is expanding. In addition to data transfer between Amstrad PCW, BBC and IBM formats, Mapej will now be able to transfer files to and from Apple Macintosh format discs, together with about 300 CP/M formats.

The expanded service will also include a laser printing facility, using a Hewlett Packard LaserJet III printer to print out files from LocoScript 1 and 2. As with the service which Mapej currently offer, the work they carry out can usually be completed within a week.

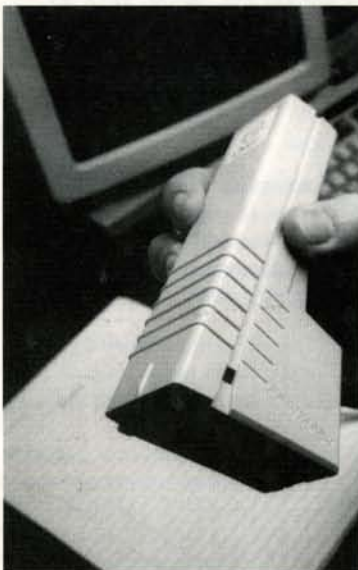
Mapej can now be found at Meadow View, Quinta Crescent, Weston Rhyn, Oswestry, Shropshire SY1 07R.

Spies like us

NCC Blackwell have just published a book entitled *A Practical Guide to the Computer Misuse Act* to coincide with the recent introduction of government data security legislation. The book explains the 1990 Computer Misuse Act and its implications, and will be under the scrutiny of BookLook in the near future.

Printer shrink

Continuing what seems to have become a series on the most diminutive hardware releases to hit the market, this month sees the unleashing of a printer the size of a pen. The Oyster Printapen 5000 is, admittedly, a little larger than your average



The Printapen from Oyster Terminals, complete with RS232 compatible interface

biro, but, at 15cm high and 3.5cm wide, it is still a remarkably small device. Weighing in at a paltry 130g, the Printapen comes complete with RS232 interface compatibility, and two built-in fonts. It also boasts seven international character sets. The pen, which has spent almost eighteen months in development, uses Hewlett Packard ink jet cartridges, which have a lifetime of 10 million dots, or 500,000 characters.

At the moment, the Printapen is available direct from the manufacturers at a cost of £299. UK distribution outlets are currently being finalised. For more details, contact Oyster Terminals Ltd at Fair Oak House, Church Road, Newport, Gwent. Their telephone number is 0633 214147.

Logo learning

If you're a keen Dr Logo user, and like the idea of encouraging others to learn, now could be the opportunity to export your knowledge to Europe. A plea has reached the 8000 Plus office from an English school in Geilenkirchen, West Germany, for simple listings and programs in the language.

The children, aged between 7-11 years old, have just started work with Logo using the PCW 8256. The teachers want to interest them in Logo as a start to programming work, by showing them simple graphic displays. They are, however, short of material. Discs will be returned, and should be sent to Adrian Joice, Geilenkirchen School, RAF Detachment, BFPO 42.

Operation upgrade

PCW SuperDOS, the program which purports to make CP/M (the PCW's operating system) more environmentally friendly, has been upgraded. Manufacturers Encyclosoft have endeavoured to improve the program by adding the ability to run BASIC programs by picking them from a menu, and allowing the built-in editor to print labels and envelopes. There are also new facilities for creating, showing and hiding system files.

The speed at which the original version of SuperDOS worked has been stepped up. Encyclosoft have now compacted the program code to make the program run faster, and the screen displays have also been improved.

The new improved version of SuperDOS still costs only £29.95. Owners of the existing program can upgrade by sending the master disc (plus £5) back to Encyclosoft. Contact Encyclosoft on (0270) 811890.

Short-changed?

If our LocoMail currency conversion routine in the August issue of 8000 Plus (page 55) had you scratching your head for hours on end, rest assured. In true tradition, we couldn't help including one of our, er, deliberate mistakes in the routine, which we hereby correct.

Line 7 should have read `tab=` rather than `tab+`. After line 25, it should have read `"[RETURN][+Mail]%exchange[-Mail][RETURN]`

Finally, `cost*2` should have read `cost|2`. Thanks to Mr Alan D Winter of Hertfordshire, for putting the record straight.



Bowing to experience

Here at 8000 Plus we believe that it's never too late to start using a PCW; we're glad to hear that you are of the same opinion. This month we've heard from Ernest Purdy from Thornton Cleveleys, Blackpool, who describes himself as 'the pensioner owner of a PCW 8512'. So pleased is Mr Purdy with his PCW, he has introduced over thirty of his fellow pensioners to the machine and its capabilities. He belongs to a group called Life Long Learning (LLL), who deal with all kinds of new learning pursuits, and he would also be keen to get in touch with other PCW owners in his area. So, if you live in Blackpool and would like to hear from PCW users near you, write in and we will be only too pleased to forward your letter to Mr Purdy.

Another appeal for local PCWsters comes from Mr Micheal Soth of Glympton, Oxford, who is interested in forming a user group in the north Oxford area. He is keen to develop his DTP skills, and is also something of a BASIC expert. Any enquiries should be sent to Club News, from whence they will be forwarded to Mr Soth.

What's in a name?

Following our report on the expansion of the Hereford Amstrad User Group, or HAG as it has been known until now, Club News has been rather shocked to hear that it has also been re-christened.

Because HAG now incorporates a splinter group who meet to discuss matters PC, the club has decided to amalgamate under the umbrella title of the Hereford Computer Club or HCC, as we now presume the acronym reads. No doubt the pronunciation of the club's abbreviated form will now read less like a wizened old crone, and more like a problem with wind.

Nonetheless, the change in the club's name has not affected the enthusiasm of its members in the pursuit of PCW knowledge. Forthcoming attractions include a 'hands-on' workshop on October 3rd, and a Printmaster demonstration in November. Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of every month, and venue details can be obtained from David Rose, telephone 0432 268861.

A welcome in the Valleys

In April we asked if there were any clubs in the South Wales area, and did not receive any response. Now, Roy Underwood from Aberdare in Mid Glamorgan is set to rectify this state of affairs by setting up his own club. All he needs is your support! Enquiries, please, to be telephoned through on 0685 874972.

AUGUST WINNERS

Copies of CDS's excellent Home Entertainment Centre will shortly be winging their way to the following winners of our August competition:

Mr G W Owens of Sevenoaks, Kent, Sybil Fox of Fulham, London and R Blurton, of Buryst Edmunds. The correct answers are as follows: 1) Persia 2) The "hockey" 3) Dominoes 4) True and finally, 5) 33

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If you use Locoscript you should have a Rampac- but don't just take our word for it, see what the magazines say-

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Amstrad PCW July 1990

It's very good value and provides the easiest way of upgrading your memory.
8000 Plus February 1990

You can be sure that the Rampac will work with all your Locoscript 2 programs.
Locomotive Software

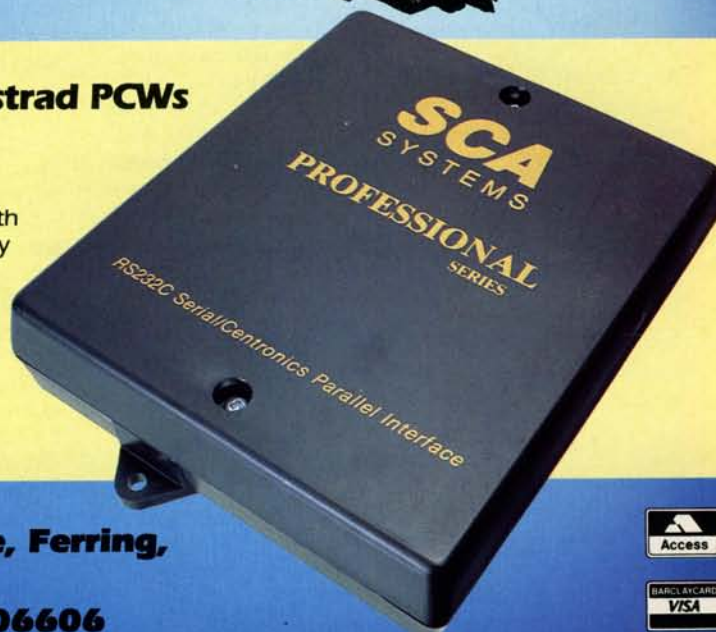
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 Telephone 0903 700288 Fax 0903 506606



I must Protext

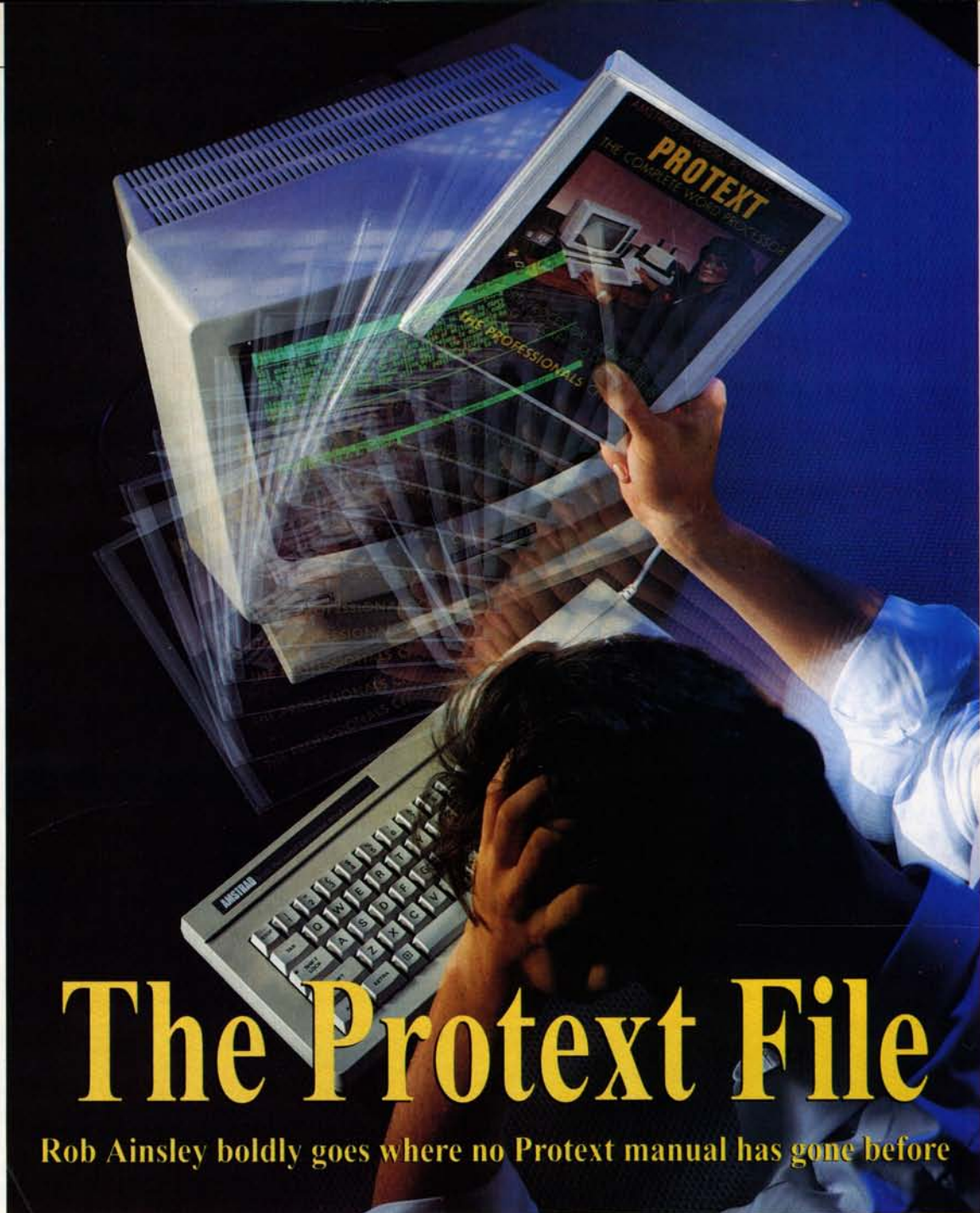
Protext is available for £49.90 from makers Arnor on 0733 68909.

Quick keys

In Protext, [F1] gives a directory; [EXTRA] [ENTER] executes the EXFILE; and [ALT] [F7] erases all the .BAK files on the working disc you are using at the time.

Vital reading

Rob Ainsley is the author of the 'alternative' Protext manual, called, simply, *Protext - A PCW User's Guide*. It costs £9.99 and is published by BSP. It can be obtained from Arnor on the telephone number above.



The Protext File

Rob Ainsley boldly goes where no Protext manual has gone before

Protext is LocoScript's main rival as a word processor. It's super fast, flexible, powerful, and has hundreds of features from a word counter to a built-in calculator. For writers and anyone preparing long documents it's a must. If you're coming from LocoScript, the speed will amaze you, and the mail merging facilities almost make up a word processing programming language.

Protext is so powerful, in fact, that the manual can't really do it justice. So here's a short selection of hints, tips, techniques and features that aren't described in the book...

1 Clean screen

Pressing [CAN] (or [DEL] right) blanks out the editing screen giving most of the screen area over to command mode. Pressing [CAN] (or [DEL] right) again gives all the screen over to command mode. To resume the normal split-screen, press [STOP].

2 Command shortcuts

a) Most commands work with one letter – eg. just press **I** [RETURN] then filename to **LOAD** a file. Similarly for **g** (goto page, line or column), **h** (help), **p** (print), **q** (quit), **s** (save), **t** (type), **u** (user), **x** (execute). Others work with three: **ren** (rename), **era** (erase) etc.

b) Pressing [COPY] brings back the previous command of more than three letters. When, for example, you type a line like **COPY B:DOCUMENT.736 M** and get an error message because the wrong disc is in the drive, insert the correct disc and press [COPY] [RETURN]. This is also useful with **a)**. For example, to rename **EXPENSES.JUN** as **EXPENSES.JUL**, type **ren** [RETURN] **EXPENSES.JUN** [RETURN] [COPY] and edit the last N to L.

c) The [ALT]A command to swap two letters works in the command line. If you type **COPY CHAPTER.* M** you can transpose the P and the A by this trick without having to edit the line

manually. This is often useful in conjunction with [COPY].

d) While you're waiting for Protext to do an operation in command mode (but not **DIR** or **CAT**) you can type in your next command line even if the **a>** hasn't reappeared yet. It will appear already typed when the **a>** shows up again.

```
a>g
GOTO P(age), L(ine) or C(olumn) number: p16
```

```
a>l
LOAD filename: chapter.6
```

```
a>u
Enter group number: 4
```

```
a>s
SAVE filename: diary.nov
```

```
a>x
Enter filename: phrases.a
```

Suppose you type **l expenses.jun** and realise you meant **.jul**. Don't wait for an error message; immediately hit [COPY] then backspace twice and press [ALT] A, then [RETURN].

3 Quick lines

There is a snappy way of moving and copying single lines of text without having to put markers down. Just delete the line with [ALT] [CAN] and insert it where you want with [ALT]U. The line starts at the position of the cursor.

You can also cut a block of text marked in the normal way with [CUT], and then [ALT]U will insert the contents of that block, up to 255 characters. (So it has the same effect as [PASTE] except that you don't need to have the block marked out in the document).

4 Stopping the printer

Stopping the printer is easy in Protext - but too often you find the text that you print next includes a bit of text from the previous document, from the point where you just stopped! Here's what to do to get round it.

1. To stop printing, press [STOP] twice.
2. Type **ab** [RETURN]
3. Wait for the printer to stop. (If you can't wait, press [PTR], move the cursor over 'RESET', press [+], then [EXIT]). Leave the paper in there
4. Now type **pron** [RETURN] **proff** [RETURN]. The printer prints a couple of words. Repeat step 3 to be absolutely safe if the document is longer than one page.
5. Change the paper. The next time you print you should find it all works out correctly.

5 Imitate LocoScript

You can configure Protext so that the [+] key duplicates [ALT]X - the result being that [+]i sets italics, [+]b bold and so on, just like LocoScript.

First put the Protext startup disc in the A drive and run up Protext. (Make sure CONFIG.COM is on the disc; if not, copy it on from your startup discs).

At the a> prompt type **config** [RETURN]. Select 'setkeys for PCW' from the menu. Type in 23 [RETURN] and you see a number of columns.

Press [TAB] to put you among the

Set keys for PCW8256/8512

Key number : 23

KN	ASCII				Hexadecimal			
	N	E	S	A	N	E	S	A
19	#	>	.	.	23	AC	3E	DB
20	.	7	.	.	9C	37	9D	9F
21	.	.	.	.	9F	9F	9F	9F
22	1/2	0	.	.	A9	5C	40	00
23	.	.	.	.	18	E0	18	07
24	.	.	.	.	3D	9F	2B	DF
25	-	.	.	.	2D	C2	5F	E3
26	[	.	.	.	5B	9F	7B	1B
27	p	.	.	.	70	8F	50	E2

CONFIG can let you set up Protext so it works like LocoScript

codes on the right. Type 18e018 over the present codes in the leftmost three columns (that's e-zero, not e-o).

Now type [STOP] and then 76 [RETURN]. Press the left cursor

6 Reversed screen

In bright weather it is often convenient to have your screen reversed out - i.e. have characters displayed as black on white (or green) rather than white (or green) on black.

You can do this by inserting your CP/M disc in the A drive and typing at Protext's a> prompt ***palette 1,0** [RETURN] which reverses out the screen (the asterisk is vital).

When the A> appears, insert your Protext disc in the A drive and type **protext** [RETURN]. If you want to restore the normal colour arrangement, the procedure is similar to that above except that you type ***palette 0,1** [RETURN].

The above is fine as a one-off, but you can make yourself a special Protext startup disc that will always work with a reversed screen as follows. Insert a copy of your Protext startup disc and run up Protext. (Make sure CONFIG.COM is on the disc; if not, copy it on from your startup discs).

At the a> type **config** [RETURN] and select option 4 'General options'. Move the cursor down to 'PCW screen



Drive B: group #
BURGESS .MOV 1K EMMA .MOV 2K NEWS1 .MOV 1K NOTES .MOV 1K
CLARINET .MOV 18K MEDIA .MOV 1K MURKING .MOV 1K RIVERS .MOV 13K
218K free
h>#

A reversed-out screen like this can make your PCW much easier to read on bright days or in glory conditions

PROTEXT v2.23 (c) Arnor 1986 Type HELP for
a>*palette 1,0
A)protext

And this is all you have to do to set it up. Just make sure your CP/M disc is handy.

colour' and press I (capital letter i). Press [STOP] then 9 to 'save configuration file'. Save it to the A drive with [RETURN].

Then press 0 to return to Protext; from now on this disc will always run Protext with a

reversed screen. Protext will override any screen colours you have set in CP/M when it runs.

Reversed screens are good in bright conditions, but in dark conditions can be very tiring on the eyes in normal lighting.

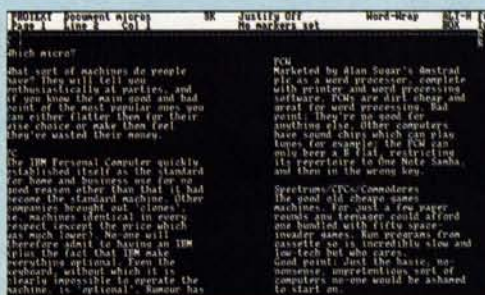
7 Two column printing

You can set up on screen, and print out, text in two (or any number of) columns with Protext.

Set your text out as one long column, editing it in this form. Just before printing out you use box mode to cut the column into as many parts as you want and arrange those boxes on the page as required.

Suppose you want to produce two columns on a page for a newsletter. First make a ruler line the width of the required column, which will of course be just under half the width of the distance between left and right margins on the page. Then you enter the text and edit as normal.

When you're ready to print out, go halfway down the column (the total number of lines is displayed at the top for you of course). Press [ALT]B to select box mode if it doesn't say 'box mode' at the top of the screen, and put a marker at the beginning of the line with [SHIFT][+]. Then go to the bottom of the column and



Protext showing off two perfect columns. Note the 'BOX insert' mode message top right.

put a marker at the right hand margin of the bottom line. The whole bottom half of the column should be enclosed in markers.

Before moving this box to the right hand half of the page you have to set a new ruler line. Go to the top of the page and replace the narrow ruler with one as wide as two columns plus the gap in between.

Now you can move the cursor to the top left hand corner of where the right hand column is to go, and press [PASTE]. You have perfect two column text, and if you selected justification originally they will still be justified,

because Protext pads out lines with spaces to achieve this.

If you have more than two pages of text for your long thin column, paste the whole of the second page onto the first; this leaves you with a blank second page. Delete that by deleting all the blank lines until the text which was on the third page

occupies the second, and continue as above from there.

Don't try any formatting or editing now or the layout may be disturbed. However there is one way to ensure that your two-column document stays as it looks on screen, and will not be affected by reformatting: type in fix [RETURN] in command mode. The two columns appear unchanged but if you now try to reformat them nothing will happen. It can be saved now if required.

The procedure for three columns is similar. You can work in 'justified text' mode if you like.

three times and type **18d918** over the codes in the leftmost three columns.

Press [STOP] twice to go back to the main menu and press **9** to save the new setup, followed by [RETURN]. Then press **0** to go into Protext.

From now on, Protext run from this disc will let you set italics with **[+]**i and so on. To unset italics you press **[-]**i. Similarly **[+]**b sets bold, **[-]**u unsets underline and so on.

(Sharp-eyed readers will see that in fact this makes **[-]**u and **[+]**u have the same effect, because Protext doesn't actually distinguish between setting and unsetting codes).

Two minor problems. First, you find that **[+]** no longer takes you to the next occurrence of the string you're looking for with [FIND]. Instead, press [EXTRA] **[+]**. Similarly, use [EXTRA] **[-]** to go to the previous occurrence of the string instead of **[-]**.

Second, when setting out block markers you have to use [SHIFT][COPY] instead of [SHIFT][+].

8 Stopping STARTUP

If you want to stop a STARTUP or EXECUTE file which is about to be executed on entering Protext, just press [STOP] and keep it down as the Protext screen appears. The first command comes up but the cursor stops at the

10 Backing up with PIP[a]

It's essential to keep backups (copies) of all your text files on a separate disc. In Protext you can do this easily by using PIP... [a]. The advantage of this over Protext's COPY command is that it automatically knows which files have been changed since you last did a copying session. Thus you don't waste time copying files which you haven't changed, or working out which ones you have edited.

Include PIP.COM on your Protext startup disc, and have it copied to M by putting the line COPY PIP.COM M in your STARTUP file. Then if you have the phrase

KEY B *PIP M:=*. *a!PIP A:=M:*. *c!PROTEXT↑13↑

in your STARTUP file, merely pressing [EXTRA] **b** in command mode will hop out of Protext and copy to the M drive all files that have been edited or in some other way changed since the last use of PIP...[a]. Then it copies all files from M to A but asks you to

end; press any key to continue with the STARTUP file, or [STOP] again to stop the commands continuing.

[STOP] once more deletes the command shown and takes you back to the a> prompt.

```
Copy pip.com m
Key P *pip m:=a:*. *a!pip a:=m:*. *c!protext↑13↑

a)*pip m:=a:*. *a!pip a:=m:*. *c!protext

COPYING -
CHAPTER.3
CHAPTER.2
INDEX
COPYING -
PROTEXT.BUT (V/N)? n
CHAPTER.2 (V/N)? y
CHAPTER.3 (V/N)? y
PROTEXT.1 (V/N)? y
INDEX (V/N)? y
A)protext
```

Lines like that at the top in your EXFILE means you can easily back up your files.

The ↑ is entered with [EXTRA]U.

confirm with Y or reject the copy and move to the next file with N - letting you insert your backup disc in the meantime and also ensuring that things hanging around M like PROTEXT.SVS don't get copied if you don't want them copied - just press N. Finally it goes back into Protext for you and the document you were working on is still there.

11 Bigger discs

If you format a disc in the A drive of an 8256 or 8512 using DFORMD instead of DFORM the disc works as normal but you get 178k of space available instead of 173k.

12 Group names

When you get a directory, the name of the group is shown as 'group 0' or something similar.

You can name a group by saving an empty file with a name ending in .GRP - the first eight letters are taken as the name, which will be displayed with every directory.

```
PROTEXT V2.23 (c) Arnor 1985
2b)dir
Drive B: group 2 LETTERS
LETTERS.GRP OK TAXMAN .001 2K
290K free
2b)■
```

That zero-K file LETTERS.GRP makes the group take the name LETTERS. LocoScript will recognise this name too.

Erasing or renaming this file erases or changes the group name. (Doing a directory on a LocoScript group shows the same name as was used in LocoScript).

13 Pluses and minuses

If you have asked FIND to find something, pressing **[+]** moves to the next occurrence of it in the text. Similarly **[-]** moves to the previous occurrence. This saves having to press [FIND] again.

This trick also works with [EXCH], to useful effect. While going through a document pressing Y to replace and N not to replace, Protext keeps moving automatically to the next occurrence of the text to be replaced. But suppose while moving through you see a dreadful typing error that you have to correct

9 Sorting into order

It is possible to use the 'build dictionary' option to sort a word list into order, as hinted in the Protext manual, but it isn't practical for something like a book index. The best solution is to use one of the sorting files on the 8000 Plus Tips Collection. If you don't have that, type in and save the BASIC listing below as per the instructions in the 'Listings' section of this issue of 8000 Plus. Save it as SORT.BAS. It won't work with very big files (over 8K say); you'll need the 8000 Plus Tips Collection to tell you how to tackle those.

```
Budgies, 23
Aardvarks, 56
Dogs, 76, 34, 78-82
Guinea pigs, 54 et. seq.
Cats, 2
Zebras, 9
Pigs, 2, 65, 87-96
Rabbits, 3-5
Fish, 59
```

```
10 DIM line$(1000)
20 INPUT "Name of file to be sorted"; infile$
30 INPUT "Name of file to put result in"; outfile$
40 OPEN "I",1,infile$ : OPEN "O",2,outfile$
50 WHILE NOT EOF(1)
60 maxline%=maxline%+1 : LINE INPUT #1, line$ (maxline%)
70 WEND
80 FOR i%=2 TO maxline%
90 PRINT CHR$(13); "line"; i%; "/" ; maxline%;
100FOR j%=i% TO 1 STEP -1
110IF UPPER$(line$(j%)) >
```

```
UPPER$(line$(j%-1)) THEN
140
120SWAP line$(j%), line$(j%-1)
130NEXT j%
140NEXT i%
150FOR i%=1 TO maxline%
160PRINT #2, line$(i%)
170NEXT
180CLOSE
```

In Protext, prepare your index, one entry to a line, and save as say INDEX. Next insert a disc in the drive with the sorting program on it and type

***BASIC SORT [RETURN]**

or whatever the name of the program is. When prompted for the name of the file to be sorted insert the disc with the Protext file on it and enter

```
INDEX [RETURN]
and give the name of the file to put the result in as say
INDEX.SRT [RETURN].
```

When it's finished insert your Protext startup disc and type PROTEXT [RETURN].

The file INDEX.SRT is the sorted version of INDEX and can be edited as a normal Protext file. Numbers are sorted in alphabetical, not numerical order, by the way: BASIC will sort 2 after 10.

The easiest way to sort items into order - to make a book index like that above, for example - is to use a BASIC listing like the one above.

The procedure is quite easy (right); the above shots show the index 'before' and 'after'.

```
PROTEXT V2.23 (c) Arnor 1985 Type HELP
a)*basic sort
Mallard-80 BASIC with Jetsam Version 1.29
(c) Copyright 1984 Loconomotive Software Ltd
All rights reserved
31597 free bytes
Name of file to be sorted? index
Name of file to put result in? index.srt
line 18 / 18
Ok
system
A)protext■
```


there and then; just press [STOP] and the find and replace process stops.

Correct the error.

Now press [=] and you move to the next text to be replaced; [EXCH] starts up again and prompts you with 'Replace (y/n)?' again. You can press Y to replace, N not to replace, and move onto the next occurrence as before.

14 Did I change it?

An easy way of checking if you've made any changes since the last save of a file you are editing is as follows.

Just go into command mode and press I [RETURN]. If it says 'Abandoned unsaved file (y/n)?' then you know you have made some changes and should save it.

Press n and carry on as normal. If however it says 'LOAD filename:' then you know the file has been saved in its present form; you can clear it safely with clear [RETURN].

15 Ruling across

To rule a line across the page the quickest way is as follows. Press [RETURN] to move to the new line then [ALT]x then u to start underlining, [ALT]/ then r to move to the right hand margin, and [ALT]x then u to stop underlining.

This automatically fills in spaces across the width of the document being edited (according to the current ruler line) for you.

16 Capital gesture

A surprisingly useful command is [ALT]/ which turns the letter under it into upper case. Keep the keys pressed down and the conversion carries on until you release them. To change 'In case of Fire' to 'IN CASE OF FIRE', keep [ALT]/ pressed down. The command [ALT] full stop does the conversion into lower case.

17 Quick phrases

Phrases stored under V, W and X are reproduced by the touch of one key each: [f3], [f5] and [f7] respectively. For any phrases you use very often, these can save a lot of time.

18 Quick demonstration

Take any longish text file and add [253] at the beginning. (The | is [EXTRA] full stop, if it isn't on the keyboard). Then clear the document and in command mode type x followed by the name of the document. The contents of the document are typed to screen at reading pace, making it effective for presentations or demonstrations – you can also pretend to be touch-typing the text going onto screen at about 200 words per minute.

If you want the text to clear and repeat when it finishes, add at the end the three lines

```
[254]clear
y
[254]x (name of file)
...make sure you end with [RETURN].
```

```
PROTEXT Document << No File >> 1K Justify Off Word-Wrap ALT-H for Help
Page 1 Line 20 Col 1 No markers set BOX Insert
>HM 4
>PL 62
>HE The ophiolite-bearing Schistes lustrés nappe in Alpine Corsica: a model
The ophiolite-bearing Schistes lustrés nappe in Alpine Corsica: a
model for the emplacement of ophiolites which have suffered HP/LT
metamorphism
```

The ophiolite-bearing Schistes lustrés nappe in Alpine Corsica:
a model for the emplacement of ophiolites which have suffered
HP/LT metamorphism - Page 134

but such layers do not demonstrate the expected results. The incidence of ferrites, for example, is 40% lower than the figure normally encountered for such structures, while the amount of calcites is 60-70% greater.

Note the very long header line in the screenshot. The text is actually the same as in the title of the first page, and the arrangement of spaces makes sure it prints out as above

19 Multi-line headers

Protext can only handle single line headers, but you can get multi-line headers from the fact that Protext doesn't format automatically.

Just type all the lines of your header on a very long single line, each separated by about 10-30 spaces. When it prints out, the header line will be too long for the printer's 80 columns and will spill over on to the second and subsequent lines. It'll take a bit of trial and error to get the align-

ment right.

The command FORMAT doesn't affect stored commands so you can safely use it to tidy up the text. The text should not be too tight down the bottom of the page or it may go over the end.

You'll need to allow for the extra lines these headers give you in the page length command. If there are two extra lines, then reduce the page length by two; >PL 64 would become >PL 62 for example.

20 Lookup files

Keep your phone numbers in a file NUMBERS. Include a line in your STARTUP or EXFILE on the startup disc that says COPY NUMBERS M, and another line that says KEY N 'TYPE M:NUMBERS↑13↑'.

Now, whenever you need to look up a number, just go into command mode and press [EXTRA]n. The numbers file is displayed on screen without disturbing the document you're working on.

Press [STOP] to stop it as it's typed; any key press will now make it continue being typed to screen, except for another [STOP] which stops the typing to screen altogether.

If you edit the NUMBERS file, do it to the version on disc, not to the one in the memory.

The same technique can be used for any information you need to access quickly and regularly, such as a diary or addresses file.

```
PROTEXT Document << No File >> 1K Justify Off Word-Wrap ALT-H for Help
Page 1 Line 5 Col 1 No markers set BOX Insert
copy numbers m
key n 'type m:numbers↑13↑'

PROTEXT v2.23 (c) Arnor 1986 Type HELP for Command info
type m:numbers
lardyce & Sons... 051 377 2671
associated Biscuits... 071 645 2771
British Rail Bath... 463075
British Sock Assoc
```

The addition of two simple lines like that at the top in your EXFILE makes it possible to consult your telephone directory, address book or diary at the touch of a single key

21 And there's more...

Here are some other important Protext items that have been printed in 8000 Plus in the past, with the issues in which they appeared. Some back numbers may be available from The Old Barn, Somerton, Somerset.

ASCII files/Protext to LocoScript:

Tipoffs, this issue

Making printout come in 12 pitch as standard instead of 10 pitch

Tipoffs, issue 47 (Aug 90)

Adding up times automatically

Tipoffs, issue 45 (Jun 90)

Merging a number of files together in order of their names

Tipoffs, issue 45 (Jun 90)

Designing your own fonts, symbols or characters (draft quality only)

Issue 39, p55 (Dec 89)

Simple graphics in a Protext document

Issue 24, p37 (Sep 88)

Footnotes and references

Tipoffs, Issue 24 (Sep 88)

A load of \$%*!

The [SHIFT LOCK] key makes you type ABC!"£ instead of abc123. Press again to disengage. On the other hand, pressing [ALT] [ENTER] engages or disengages 'caps lock', in which abc123 becomes ABC123.

Overdoing it

[ALT] [TAB] engages or disengages 'overwrite' mode, in which whatever you type overwrites whatever is beneath. Normally Protext works in 'insert mode' like LocoScript.

THERE ARE SEVERAL DATABASES FOR THE PCW



But only one for LocoScript

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You can use it just like a card index; there's a separate card for each page of information. You can design the layout of the cards to suit your needs and you can change the number and order of the items in your cards at any time.

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NEW! LocoFile and LocoScript 2 bundled together for only £44.90 – the ideal purchase for any 8000 PCW user still using the original software, LocoScript 1. This gives all the benefits of LocoFile and, for only £9.95, LocoScript 2, the faster and better word processor for your PCW.

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☐ 8512

☐ 9512

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Protext and Survive

In the first of our new series of guides, Sophie Lankenau shows you round the hitherto uncharted territories of that alternative word processor, Protext. We start with the basics

With LocoScript more than established as the PCW's native word processor, the competition has a difficult time getting noticed, let alone being seriously considered as an alternative. Protext has been on the market for five years, and is the favourite of many PCW users – the most common reason being its superior speed when placed side by side with LocoScript. Indeed, it is because of this that, here at 8000 Plus, we have adopted it as our choice of word processor in the office. This month we will look at everything you'll need to know to get started in Protext – in other words, the basics; creating, saving, loading and erasing documents.

Protext differs from LocoScript initially in that it is a CP/M based program. The first step towards operating the program is, however, the same as it is with any other – make a back-up copy of the master discs. The procedure for doing so, outlined in section 3a of the manual, is quite straightforward. To copy the master disc, you will need a blank, formatted disc, and your CP/M disc (on side two of the original LocoScript disc). With CP/M installed, type **DISCKIT** at the A> prompt, and follow the instructions for copying a disc. You will be left with a self-booting copy of Protext, which, with the CP/M start-up procedure built in, can be loaded without having to change discs.

In your command

LocoScript faithfuls will be struck, initially, by the difference in Protext's opening screen. Gone is the friendly, portioned disc management screen; you are faced, instead, by a banner arrangement and an a>prompt (see screenshot). This marks another of the crucial differences between LocoScript and Protext; while the former is known as a 'menu-driven' program, Protext is command driven, and it is the section of the screen beneath the middle 'banner' into which you type your commands.

The next stage is to start work. Insert a fresh, unformatted 'working' disc into the appropriate drive. At the A> prompt, type in **DFORM** followed by the drive indicator (ie A or B). Follow the prompts, and Protext will enable you to format a disc, with none of the inconvenience of swapping.

You are now ready to go. Unlike

LocoScript, Protext has no disc management screen to indicate how disc space is being used. The banner at the top of the Protext screen gives no clue as to the arrangement of the documents on your discs. If the working disc which you are using already contains some files, you will want to check what is on the disc, and where it is stored.

To find out, type **DIR** or **CAT** at the a> prompt (if your working disc is in the B drive, simply type **b**: followed by **[RETURN]** and then **DIR**, or just **DIR B**). However, when a **DIR** is carried out at the a> or b> prompt, it reports the contents of group 0 by default (see screenshot). To find out what is in any

other group – and there are fifteen of them to inspect – type in **U** or **USER**. You will then be asked to specify a group number. On doing so, the a> prompt will return, preceded by the group which you have selected; for example, 1a>, 2a> and so on. From then onwards, any work carried out will be done so in that particular group unless you specify otherwise.

Directory enquiries

If you know the name of a document but you cannot remember the group number in which it is stored, Protext will search for it on your behalf. Simply type in **DIR** or **CAT**, followed by the ➤

What's the damage?

Protext is available from Arnor, 611 Lincoln Road, Peterborough, PE1 3HA (telephone 0733 68909), at a cost of £59.95. They also stock the definitive Protext 'manual' by Rob Ainsley (£9.95).

The Second Opinion

Office Manager Yvonne Lloyd has been a PCW and LocoScript devotee for several years.

Yvonne will be following our Protext tutorial series every month, and telling us just how well she is coping with the LocoScript to Protext 'conversion.'

"Within my working life, personal computers and word processors have moved from the realms of science fantasy into the mundane tools of everyday living. When Amstrad brought out the PCW 9512 for £499, I persuaded my employer that for the price, the machine was no more costly than a decent electronic machine.

Since that time, I have worked constantly with the LocoScript program with few complaints. So, to the transition from LocoScript to Protext...

Now, having played around with both programs for a week or so, my answer has to be that, in future, I shall use both. Because of the neat, automatic cataloguing and grouping of files in LocoScript, together with the ease of creating, editing and the single action save and print function, I



Yvonne Lloyd, for several years a confirmed PCW and LocoScript devotee, turns her hand to Protext

shall continue to use LocoScript for the dozen or so single page letters and memos which I type each day.

Where Protext wins hands down over LocoScript is in the creation and editing of long documents such as reports, articles and books. When asked to find a word or a page, LocoScript searches with frustrating slowness. Protext whips from page to page, and around the page, in the space of a blink. It has many features which would be of inestimable value to the professional writer, such as instantaneous total word-counting, and will even tell you how many times a single word has

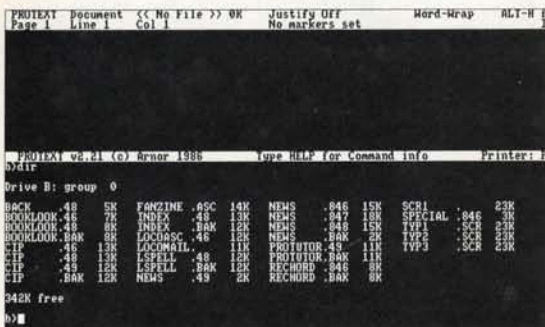
been used in a document.

When throwing together a single omelette. I use a fork. When preparing a meal for a party of people, I use a food processor. I would not like to be without either a fork or a food processor. Having got to grips with the rudiments of Protext, this will now be my processor for the big jobs, but I shall continue to use the LocoScript fork for all the little jobs."

Next month, Yvonne looks at document editing.



The ProteXt start-of-day screen is bare in comparison to the LocoScript disc management display...



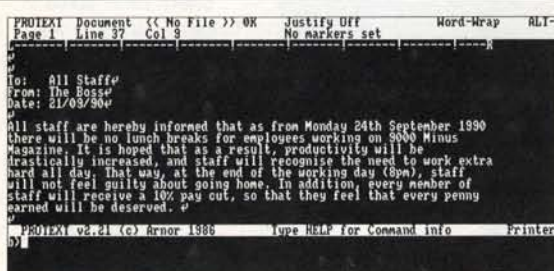
...but a 'dir' at the a> prompt soon reveals all the information you need about how your disc space is organised

What's on?

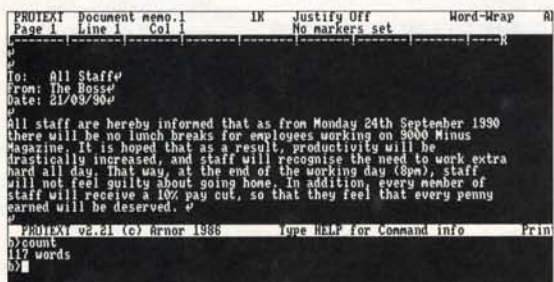
During text editing, a quick way to get a directory of the files on your disc without having to exit manually into command mode is to press [f1].

filename, and the program will try to find it. If it is there, its name, size and group number will appear on screen; if it does not exist, or you have mis-spelt the filename, a blank space greets you.

The process of starting work on a document in ProteXt will exemplify at once the superior speed of the program to its famous rival. ProteXt's quickly accessible editing mode turns the screen into a kind of scribbling pad, lending itself particularly well to the impulsive writer. All you have to do to go into editing mode is to press either [STOP] or [EXIT], and immediately, the dividing banner disappears leaving a clean, empty screen, with only the top banner (or 'status line') in evidence right at the top of the screen. You can then begin writing at once, without the



You can [EXIT] or [STOP] into command mode at any stage during text editing, and your document remains visible on screen



Protext has a very fast wordcount facility, accessible automatically while in editing mode by simply pressing [f3]

LocoScriptian delay of selecting a group, naming the document and waiting for the editing screen to appear.

Use your empty screen to type in something straightforward, such as a quick note or memo. Notice that the reverse video banner at the top of the screen has the bracketed message <No file>. What this means is that the document is as yet, anonymous. Once your note is finished, you will want to save it and give it a name – so you will need to go into the command section of the screen once more. Press either [STOP] or [EXIT]; the screen will again be divided by a middle banner, but your document will still be visible in the edit half of the screen (see screenshot).

Make way

To save, and indeed name, the document, type **s** at the prompt. The command **save filename:** appears – now is your chance to transform <No file> into something more meaningful. Let's call the document MEMO.1. Type in the name, followed by [ENTER]. Although the message <No file> has not yet been replaced by **Memo.1**, when you type in **DIR** you will see that it has been added to the list. If you then go back into edit mode, the new name will appear at the top of the screen. A second DIR will reveal the addition of a file called **MEMO.1.BAK** – ProteXt automatically makes a back-up copy of all your files.

You can name a document before you start work on it, as is the norm with LocoScript. To do this, type in **Name** at the a> prompt in command mode, and you will be asked for a title. Once you have given the name, press [EXIT] to go into edit mode, where the name will appear at the top of the screen.

When you have finished your memo, you may decide that you want to prepare another document. Go back to the command section by pressing [STOP] or [EXIT] and save the memo in the way described above. Now, to remove the text from the edit section of the screen, making way for a new document, type in **CLEAR** at the prompt. If you haven't saved your work, the question **Abandon unsaved file Y/N?** will appear on screen. Answering **Y** means that any changes made since you last saved the file will not be registered. Answering **N** returns you to the a> prompt; you can then save the document and repeat the **CLEAR** command. The text in the edit half of the screen disappears, and you are free to start work on your new document.

Loading up

Start of day loading of documents is very straightforward – with a DIR displaying file names in front of you, type in **L** at the a> prompt. ProteXt asks you for a filename, which you key in, and pressing [ENTER] brings the text to the edit half of the screen. All you have to do then is to press [EXIT] to go into edit mode where you can continue to amend your work in the usual way. One of the advantages of being able to

switch quickly between the edit and command environments is that you can stop at any time during text preparation, and implement various instructions – without having to tidy documents away and then recall them later.

Protext's wordcount facility is an example of one of the program's useful features, and, characteristically, it is carried out at speed. Pressing [STOP] or [EXIT] takes you into command mode; type in **count** at the prompt and within seconds, the number of words in your document is calculated for you (see screenshot). However, despite its speed, this is the long way round; if, while in edit mode you simply press the [f3] key, you are immediately taken to the command screen, where the **count** instruction is already installed.

Protext allows you to handle files in groups as well as individually. This is particularly useful when you need to erase several files at a time, to make space on your disc. The singular erase command is the letters **era** typed in at the a> prompt, followed by the name of the file to be erased. You must be sure that you want to be rid of the document, because no sooner has the command been entered, it is carried out.

Spring cleaning

For multiple file erasure, ProteXt responds to the use of 'wildcards' – the ? and * symbols. Say you want to erase a group of files all with the same name – perhaps a series of letters to one person, with the names LETTER.1 to LETTER.10. At the prompt, type in **ERA** followed by **LETTER.?** This instructs ProteXt to erase all files beginning with the word LETTER – the wildcard ? covers any single numerical suffix which follows (it will not deal with anything above 9, as double figures are regarded as words). If your letters files were suffixed by names – say, LETTER.JIM, LETTER.BOB and so on – or just groups of letters, you could erase them all at once by typing in **ERA LETTER.***. The * tells ProteXt to remove any file beginning with the word LETTER, regardless of its suffix.

You can even erase all the files on a disc if you want to; the command **ERA **** initiates this rather drastic move. However, you are warned with the message **Are you sure?** when ProteXt sees the command, so you have a chance to think about the wisdom of your actions first. Once you have become used to the command driven system, you will find ProteXt as easy to navigate as LocoScript. Indeed, you have an in-built 'manual' to consult in the form of the **HELP** files indicated on the dividing banner – a useful and quickly accessible inclusion, given the rather woolly nature of the ProteXt manual.

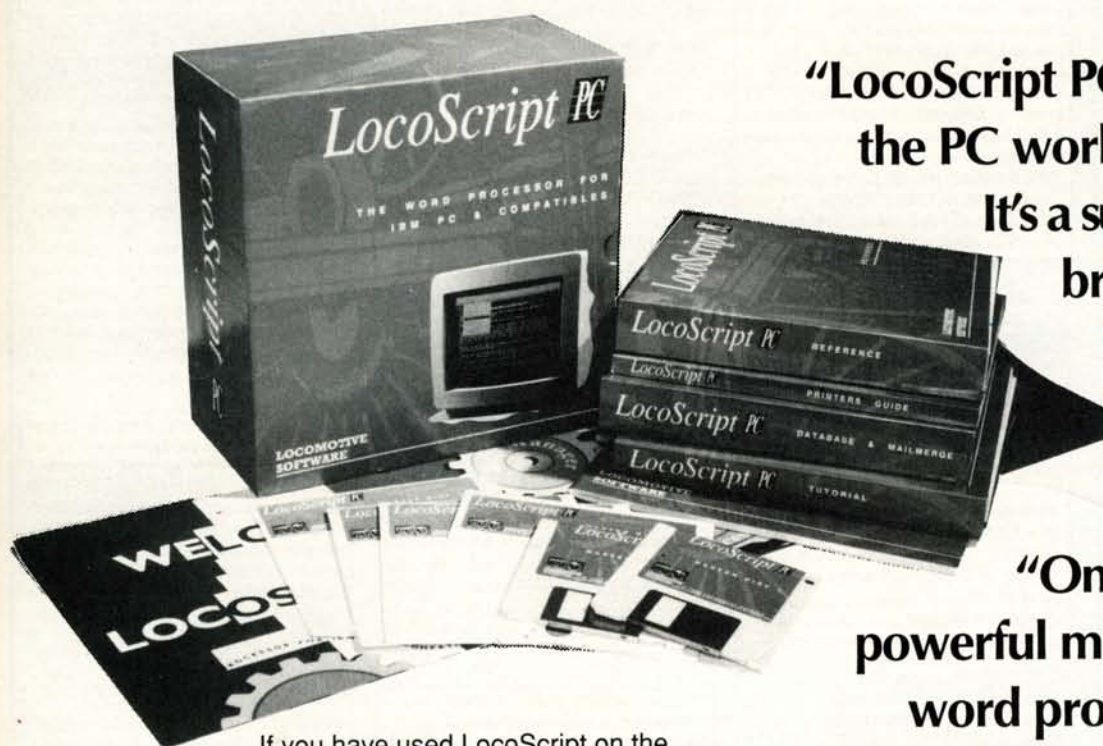
With the basics firmly in your grasp, you are ready to go about preparing documents. In next month's guide, we will take a look at simple document editing techniques, including the use of blocks to cut, copy, paste and remove whole chunks of text. ●

**"One of the most important
word processing events in
a long time"**

Rex Last, Popular Computing Weekly, 21 June Issue

**"PCW users are going to be
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Steve Patient, PC Plus, August Issue



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James Clifford, Amstrad PCW Magazine, July Issue

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Guy Kewney, Personal Computer World, July Issue

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LocoScript PC runs on any IBM PC compatible with at least 512k RAM, DOS v2.1 or later and one floppy disc drive. All standard display adapters are supported and both 5¼" and 3½" discs are supplied in the package. †Special characters require a graphics adapter and a suitable 24 pin printer.



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* PC1640/1512 state col or mono.....£7.85
* Amstrad PPC£5.20
* Pace disc drive cover£5.00
* State exact model when ordering

PCW8000's Wire printer stand.....£9.13
Any width printer stand-rugged.....£14.75
Printer cleaning kit-PCW8000's£14.60
Mouse Mats.....£4.35
'Margin Maker' - aligns paper£9.90
Spike Protector plug - helps protect computers against power surges£10.25
"Dongle" - if you own an 'Export' PCW you will need this gadget to link to interface/RamPac etc. Our price£17.00

PRINTERS

Citizen range (2 year guarantee), NEC, Panasonic, Epson, Amstrad and more!

DISCS AT SPECIAL PRICES!

CF2 3" Amsoft PCW/CPC x 5£11.00
Amsoft x10£18.50
Amsoft x20£34.40
Amsoft x30£52.50
Amsoft x40£71.20
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Maxell x10£16.80
Maxell x20£33.00
Maxell x30£48.60
Maxell x40£64.00

Maxell individually cased discs are available as the Amsoft prices above.

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3.5" Bulk-Unbranded x25£19.00
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PCW 9512 - daisywheel printer:

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New Fabric type x 2£6.00
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AMSTRAD BRANDED PRINTER RIBBONS

PCW8256 Fabric or Carbon Ms x2£13.00
PCW9512 Carbon Multistrike x2£13.00

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PCW 8000 Fabric: phone for availability
Green / Red / Blue / Brown / Yellow / Purple / Magenta or Cyan
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Any Five£27.60
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A selection of other printer ribbons:

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120D x 2£7.00
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HQP40 Colour x 2£39.00
Amstrad DMP 2000/3000 x 2£7.90
LQ3500 x 2£13.50
LQ5000 x 2£17.50
Star LC10 x 2£6.30
LC24-10 x 2£7.10
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AMSTRAD PCW SOFTWARE

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Flipper 2 Plus- not for PCW8256.....£26.00

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PROTEXT - THE FULL SYSTEM:£33.00 includes a very fast wordprocessor, a spell-checker and a superb mail-merge utility that is almost a programming language in itself. The latest version.

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LocoFile - state which PCW used.....£22.65
New Thesaurus-use with LocoFile.....£12.80
LocoMail II£21.00
LocoSpell II£18.80
LocoFont I (10 fonts) for loco2£14.70
LocoFont II (6 fonts) for loco2£11.25
Keyboards Disc (inc. LocoKey).....POA
Printer Drivers Disc.....POA
24 Pin Printer Drivers Disc.....POA
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NEW OUT*NEW OUT***NEW OUT***
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More than a simple labeller - ideal for anything from greetings labels to consecutively numbered raffle tickets.

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dBase II-the 'do all' database.....£42.00
Prodata£47.45
Digita Datastore II.....£23.40
Camsoft Cambase.....£45.00
see LOCOFILE in wordprocessing

Books - Zero rated so do not add VAT

LocoScript II User Guide£14.95
As Above but Spiral Bound.....£19.95
LocoMail User Guide.....£14.95
LocoSpell User Guide.....£14.95
LocoFile User Guide.....£14.95
Mallard Basic Manual for PCW.....£9.95
Protext, A PCW Users Guide£9.95

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MONEY MANAGER PCW- GREAT VALUE!£28.25
This is the very latest version from the Connect stables - a top seller!

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Re-Chord: Music Library - Prog. £26.04

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PSIL - Integrated. Stock/Inv./Sale/ Purch./Nom.£149.00
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DESKTOP PUBLISHING --- DESIGN --- GRAPHICS

MICRO DESIGN II - A revolution in desktop publishing on the Amstrad PCW! £35.65

RUNS ON: the PCW8256/8512/9512 (the PCW9512 needs a dot matrix to print).
"The manual is comprehensive, immensely friendly, and will lead you where you want to go." (New Computer Express) - and it's 150 pages long.
IMPORT FILES FROM: Locoscript 2, Protex, Wordstar, Masterscan, Stop Press and other PCW software. "beats the opposition hands down." (Amstrad PCW Magazine).
PRINTING: Specialised software supports almost all 9 & 24 pin printers - there is even support for a Laser printer. "the results are superb." (The Guardian).
FONTS: "a healthy selection." (New Computer Express) There are 25 free fonts supplied with the program and if you want more you can design your own!
** TEXT EDITING : TYPESETTING : FONT DESIGN : GRAPHICS : DIAGRAMS : LOGOS **
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What more can we say? - Apart from.....Comprehensive details are available.

Microdesign II + Kempston Mouse & Interface (Includes Jeeves & Daatafax)£84.00
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PCW Draw (Drafting Program)£33.00
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* PROFESSIONAL INVOICES, STATEMENTS
* EFFECTIVE STOCK CONTROL
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Very popular integer C compiler
HiSoft Devpac80£33.85
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FTL Editor Toolkit£29.00
Complete Modula-2 source to editor
FTL APK£29.00
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HiSoft FORTH£17.35
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Essential utility for PCW.

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C price on application
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The old 80/20 rule states that:
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Top quality training course on disc with instructor on audio tape

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RT-LocoScript II - PCW8256/8512£29.90
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DESIGNED ESPECIALLY FOR NEW USERS

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Recta 10£6.00
Script 12£6.00
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Amstrad PCW9512 automatic sheet feeder complete with necessary software to allow the 9512 to take full control of itprice on application

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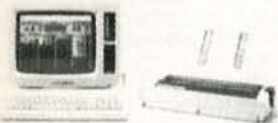
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- Fully integrated word processor system
- 82 key Keyboard
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- 90 CPS in draft 20 CPS NLQ
- Locoscript software
- CP/M Plus with GSX & Dr.Logo
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Free on-site maintenance on all PCW's

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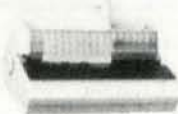
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£69 ONLY

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CPS 9512 AMSTRAD RS232
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PCW RIBBONS

PRINTER	QTY	QTY	QTY
AMSTRAD	2+	5+	10+
PCW 8256/8512 NYLON	£4.30	£4.00	£3.50
PCW 8256/8512 CARBON	£4.75	£4.50	£4.00
PCW 9512 NYLON	£3.50	£3.30	£3.00
PCW 9512 CARBON	£4.75	£4.50	£4.00

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Stop Press + AMX Mouse £59.00

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Database Software **£20.00**
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DAISYWHEELS FOR PCW 9512

AVAILABLE TYPE STYLES

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Courier	10	Prestige Pica
Recta	10	Orator
Letter Gothic 10/12	12	Prestige Elite
Script	12	Mini Gothic

Each **£6.00**

For other printer ribbons please call

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AMSTRAD V21/V23

Features 1200/75, 75/1200, 300/300
Baud rates **£99.00**



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A file transfer system from PCW to PC
£19.90

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E-Type	£18.00
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Supercalc 2 **£35.00**
Cracker II (Turbo) **£35.00**

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**MasterScan and
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Mini Office PROFESSIONAL

Very successful - many new features
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Locoscript - Mail - Spell	£7.95
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Script Ease

In the first of our new, regular LocoScript surgeries, Liz Bruce turns Agony Aunt as she proffers the latest hints, tips and advice on LocoScript 2 disc management

Q I keep running out of space on my discs, although there seems to be very little on them. When I try to save my work, I keep getting a Disc Full message. What am I doing wrong?

A This is a common problem, caused by a misunderstanding of how to prepare discs for working. When people start using a PCW the first thing they are told to do is to make a copy of their master disc to use. Many people then discover that if they buy new discs and try to use them, they don't work, and as they are eager to press on and haven't yet discovered how to format new discs, they continue to prepare discs by making further copies of their Master disc.

They delete the files they see on the disc and can't understand why they still seem to have very little room to store their work.

If you look at the first picture, you'll see the screen as it appears if you have made a copy of the master disc. At first glance, it does look as if there's plenty of room, especially as you can only see a small number of files. However, if you look at the second picture, which is taken from exactly the same disc, but shows the hidden files, you'll see many more files.

Just looking at the number of files on the screen doesn't actually tell you anything about how much room, or lack of it, there is on a disc. You need to look in the first of the three boxes above the lists of files.

These boxes show you the status of the three available drives. Drive A is the only drive on a PCW 8265 or 9512 and the top drive on an 8512. Drive B is the bottom drive of the 8512, or any drive added to one of the other machines. Drive M is the internal memory of the computer, but is designed to work in exactly the same way as the other drives.

Underneath the name of the Drive is a summary of the disc. Under Drive A you will see that 171k of the storage space has been used, leaving only 2k free, (yes, I know that doesn't add up to 180, see later answer) and that there are 14 files on the disc.

Where are they? If you look at the file list directly below the Drive summary, the Drive A group 0 list, it tells you at the bottom that there are 9 hidden

files, and that's where the problem lies.

If you just delete the 4 displayed files, your disc is still well filled with the hidden ones. To empty the disc you have to delete the hidden files as well, by pressing [f8] to show them, then erasing them with a command selected from the [f3] key drop down menu.

Of course the real answer is to format a blank disc rather than to copy the master. Investigate the [f2] menu if you are using LocoScript 2, or the Diskit menu in CP/M if you're using LocoScript 1. Both will give you the option 'Format Disc' as well as copying.

Q Why do you have to format blank discs before you can use them? Why does the message "Address mark missing" come up if you use an unformatted disc? And what's the difference between the top and bottom drives of a PCW 8512 and the 9512 drive?

A If you've thought about it at all, you probably imagine the information on a disc is stored in much the same way as

an LP record uses its tracks – in one continuous spiral. That would be fine if you only 'accessed' the information, but what happens when you amend or add to it? If it was in one continuous line, every time you added a bit, all the rest would have to be moved to make room for it, which is not a very practical set-up. Instead, computers split discs into sectors, each containing a certain number of tracks, and the information in a file is split around the different sectors. The address mark tells the computer how to find the bits it needs to retrieve your file.

Different computers use different sectors and tracks, as do the different PCW drives, so to stop it from becoming impossible to stock discs for all the different computers and disc drives available, discs are usually sold unformatted and computers run a special formatting program which sets up the disc for the use of that specific computer.

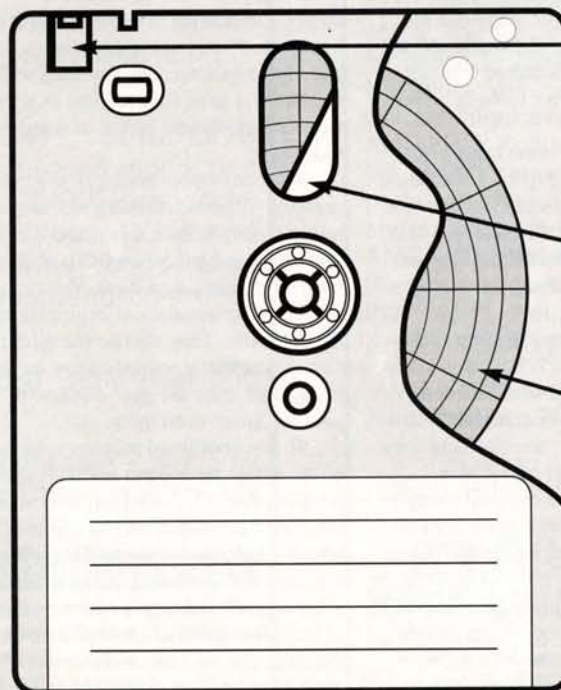
That, by the way, is what happens to the apparently missing ks of disc space, so that a formatted 180k disc only has 173k actually free for your use. The ➤

Switch glitch

You can occasionally find yourself in one of those situations where the only solution you can think of is to switch off and start again. Don't! It is switching on and off which wears the computer out, rather than the actual running of them.

Instead, press [SHIFT][EXTRA] and [EXIT] at once, and your machine will be reset.

The anatomy of a disc



The Write protection tab. When the tiny hole behind the shutter is uncovered you cannot save or write to the disc. This prevents overwriting valuable programs.

The shutter withdraws when you insert the disc into the drive; it is pulled back by the lever on the side of the case.

The disc surface is divided into a series of tracks and sectors, established when you format it. One by one these are filled with information. As the disc fills, the head may have to search through more sectors before it locates all of the code.

other ks are used to store the messages setting up the disc and telling the computer how to access the information on the disc – the mysterious address mark.

You can see from this how important the address mark is. If it gets lost or damaged, even although your data is still on the disc, the computer can't find all the bits. There are disc doctors (see margin) with special techniques for resurrecting damaged discs but it is time

bottom drive of an 8512.

If you have a 9512, you can read discs made on an 8256 and copy information from them, but you cannot put new information on the disc and take it back to the 8256. If you have an 8512 you can use both discs, and those formatted for the bottom drive are completely interchangeable with the 9512; the top drives discs are identical to the 8256.

Take out the program disc, put in a blank (formatted) disc, press [f7] and you have an empty disc ready and waiting to go.

You should never put your own information on program discs for two reasons: first, there will barely be room (the program itself will take up most of the available storage space - in some cases all of it - leaving you high and dry when you try to save your masterpiece and get the Disc Full message).

The second reason is that if you work on a program disc, you may do something to one of the program files which will alter it, either stopping the program running at all or, worse, doing something subtle which will cause some ghastly event later; you can bet it will be at the worst possible time - computers have a primitive sense of humour.

So, to recap; master discs are write-protected, and should be copied, then put at the back of your sock drawer so that they may never be used by mistake.

Program discs are write-protected and belong to the computer. You only use them to start the program. You do not start your new, epic novel on them. It is not wise to antagonise computers. Data discs are yours.

Q We keep hearing about damaged or corrupted discs. How can we stop this happening?

A There's nothing mysterious about computer discs, they're just the same as video tapes except that instead of the magnetic material being in a thin ribbon, it's a solid disc – hence the name. They don't last for ever. If you keep using the same video over and over, re-recording over what was there before, the picture quality will deteriorate and the same is true of discs, particularly as we tend to have a few we use over and over to work with. Always keep copies.

You do sometimes get a warning if something won't save or retrieve properly, but more often than not they simply fail. Because they are made of magnetic material, discs are vulnerable to anything which contains a magnet or produces a magnetic field, such as speakers, heavy motors like a vacuum cleaner, and, particularly, a ringing telephone. So don't store discs near any of these. The computer itself has a field, especially when you switch it on or off, so don't do so with a disc in the drive and don't store the discs near the computer itself. It also makes sense to store back-up copies in a different place from your working discs, so that if one lot is exposed to some strong field, the other should still survive. The easiest way to destroy information on a disc is to wipe a magnet across it. The discs are fairly well protected in their rigid covers, but bear in mind that anything such as dirt or dust on the case is going to end up in the most vulnerable part of your machine - the drive itself. Store discs in an anti-static box; treat them with respect and always, always keep copies!

Q What's the difference between master discs, program discs and data discs. And what's SOD?

A Master disc is the one which comes with software packages, or, when you buy a PCW, packaged with the machine. You know they are masters because they have printed labels on them with the name of the program – like LocoScript.

These discs are precious. If you lose them, damage them or otherwise stop them from working, you may have difficulty persuading the makers to replace them, and it will cost you in terms of both time and money.

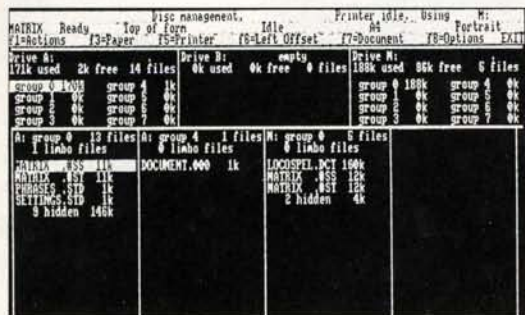
The very first thing you must do when you unwrap a master disc is to check it is write-protected. This is exactly the same as knocking out the little tab in the back of an audio or video cassette and has exactly the same effect. On a disc, though, it is reversible. Either there will be a small tab you slide down, or a tiny switch actually in the top edge which you slide over. The effect is the same: a small hole will be visible, again, just like an audio tape.

Having checked the master is write-protected, the next step is to copy it, to make a program disc.

To do this, you must have a new, empty disc to make your copy on. Unless you've just unwrapped a brand new disc, never take anyone's word – including your own, that a disc is empty. Put it in the drive and press [F7] to check. If you copy onto a disc already containing data, anything which was there is gone for ever, just as if you tape something new on top of a used video tape.

Then copy your master disc – by pressing [F2] and following the instructions. Now you have a program disc. Format some blank discs ([F2]) and you have some blank data discs. You can think of program discs as belonging to the computer. They contain the information the computer needs to carry out its tasks. Data discs are your discs, with your information on them.

To use your word processor, switch on the computer and put in (load) your program disc. This is sometimes called the SOD disc, which isn't as bad as it sounds; it stands for Start Of Day. What the computer is actually doing while it's whirring and clicking, is making a copy of the information and instructions on the disc in its own internal memory. So, once it has finished doing that, it doesn't need the disc anymore.



The disc management screen when you have made a copy of the LocoScript master disc. It looks quite empty, but beware...



...when you press [f8] and ask to see the hidden files, you'll soon discover that your disc isn't as empty as you thought.

consuming, expensive and not always successful. The answer is always, always keep back-up copies. Just as there are video tapes for different formats (even the word's the same) different types of disc drives format their discs in different ways. Although the discs themselves are physically identical, once they are formatted they can only be used in a drive running to the same format.

The 8256 drive is the same as the top drive of the 8512. It's a 180k single density drive, which works on one side of the disc at a time. Just like an audio cassette, the two sides of the disc can both be played simply by turning the disc over.

The 9512 drive is the same as the bottom drive on an 8512. This is a double density drive and works on both sides of the disc at once, so, like a video tape, you always put it in the same way round, and don't ever turn it over.

The double drive can read a single density disc, but cannot write any new information on it. So, an 8256 disc can be put in the bottom drive of an 8512, or in a 9512, and the information copied. The single drive cannot read a double disc at all. So, if you have an 8256, you cannot access information from discs prepared for a 9512, or the

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PCW Texterity

Public Domain software doesn't always have to be cheap and nasty; on the contrary, it is large and fruitful. Tim Smith plumbs the depths and comes up with a cluster of easy-to-use text facilities

SIDEWAYS.COM

```

SIDEWAYS v1.01
H or ? for help as command tail

File name (RETURN to Cancel): SI_Platty

```

Text can be printed out sideways from ASCII files with SIDEWAYS.COM

routine, from left to right. All you need do is type **SIDEWAYS**, followed by the filename of the text you have saved – in ASCII of course – hit [RETURN] and bingo! The text appears going up the page.

Now this might seem pointless to the many readers who are thinking that turning the paper on its side in the printer would do the same job. Of course without a wide carriage printer, you'd lose some of the width. Aside from this quibble, you can't really argue with a program which serves a useful purpose without costing the earth.

SIDEWAYS.COM and SIDEWAYS2.COM are intended for use with spreadsheet files. No doubt some of the keener readers among you will find more uses than that.

There is little to say about these two files except that they will print files up the page instead of the boring,

How to use the disc

```

*****
*   MENU   *
*****
By John Hunt
v2.1

A = Read Instructions
B = Read Notes on Programs
C = Return to CP/M
D = Sorted Directory
E = Advantage Catalogue

```

The disc contents are listed on the opening menu

This, as with all the other Advantage PD discs, comes with an on-line menu. This is only really of use when you first access the programs. The menu (type **Menu** at the A> prompt) simply gives you a directory of the disc, using D.COM which sorts the files into alphabetical order to view them more easily. D.COM is worth copying over to your start of day disc by the way. The best thing to do with the disc is to copy its contents to a utility disc (a blank data disc used for your CP/M needs) or to separate start of day discs.

WSCLEAN.COM

This file will be of little use to the majority of PCW users, but a great boon to a few. All it actually does is to remove the control characters from WordStar files. This allows them to be read on screen by using the TYPE command. It seems rather strange that this utility is included on the disc seeing as WordStar hasn't been commercially available for the PCW for some years now. In theory it should also work with NewWord which is probably of more use to the PCW world. What existence of this file *does* prove is that, firstly, many of the utilities were written for CP/M based computers other than the PCW (and there are many of these, all of which produce PD programs compatible with your machine), and secondly, that even your PCW has history, predecessors and a place in the wider computer world. Makes you think doesn't it?

SORT.COM

Sort fills the gap between the FIND/EXCHANGE function and having to buy or program a fully fledged database. It will move through a file, which must first have been saved in ASCII, and will arrange lists of words into alphabetical order.

To SORT.COM, any string of text (line of letters to you and me) which is separated by carriage returns is regarded as a word. So, if you were to create a file of the names of the following novelists:

Charles Dickens
Rudyard Kipling
Joe-Bob Briggs
Martin Amis

it would order them with Dickens first and Kipling last. This makes it more logical to hold the names in the file, say a phone

WCOUNT.COM

```

A>TYPE M: LIST.TIM
LIST.TIM?
A>TYPE M:LIST.TIM
BOBBY CHARLTON
MARTIN CHIVERS
ALEC STEFNEY
ALAN MULLERY

A>WCOUNT M:LIST.TIM
Lines(total/command/text)      4      0
Words = 9
A>

```

WCOUNT.COM is a cheap way to fill the gap left by LocoScript's lack of wordcounter

pressed to the screen, counting each word.

Again you have to create ASCII files of your original documents. In LocoScript you achieve this from the [F1] (LocoScript 2) or [F7] (LocoScript 1) menus. In Protex simply type in **PRINTF** and then the file name. Load the file by typing **WCOUNT** (filename) at the A> prompt; the words are checked and the total is shown on screen.

Not having a word counter built into LocoScript has long been a justifiable moan at the software. This is one of the reasons that many people move over to Protex. However, this little utility saves you both the cost of a whole wordprocessing package, and the strain of going through each one of your pieces of text with your nose

TEAMGEN.COM

This program allows you to follow the football season, in fact the lacrosse, polo or Sumo season if you like, by creating a table of two team games and their scores in this form: Ipswich 7 – 1 Chelsea. All you need to do is type TEAM.GEN at the A> prompt.

You are then asked to enter a drive letter (A,B or M) without the colon. Don't add the colon. After this you are prompted for an eight-letter word to be the filename of your saved file. The suffix .TXT is added automatically. You then provide a header for the file – something like Ipswich Cup Run or Football League Division One will do, although the header can be up to 80 characters long. You are then prompted for the home team and the score (the score can only be 0 to 9 which counts rugby out). If the match was postponed or a late kick-off, you can add P or L. This produces a line which can be filled in afterwards. The away team is the same.

Once this is done you can either add more teams and scores or simply quit. The file can then be printed from a word processor. All this could be done from the word processor, and the fact that no scores above 9 can be added detracts from it. However, programmers might

This month, we give you a guided tour around a Public Domain disc packed with text processing tools.

Software in the Public Domain is renowned for its low price and easy access. Getting hold of it couldn't be simpler; most registered suppliers only require you to send off a blank disc together with the requested fee for the copying. Advantage Software have long been appreciated by PCW owners wishing to pep up their soft-

ware collections, but not wishing to deplete their bank accounts.

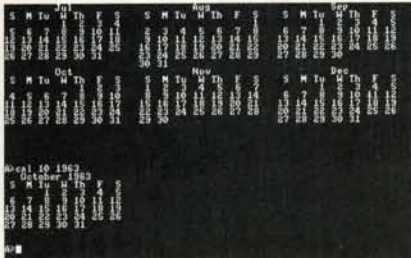
The disc we are about to look at is entitled 'Text Processing Utilities' and contains delights for any PCW owner who has craved a quick word counter or a cheap but effective way of printing large text for posters and the like.

These are two of the utilities which wait on the unassuming 3 inch disc. For the hobbyist, historian or genealogist – even for the business

person who likes to plan ahead – there is an additional, non text-based utility, which we will look at later. There's a utility to sort words within files, which will come as a boon to the untidy or plain obsessional.

There is a wealth of useful files on this disc. For information on this or any of the other PD discs available, telephone Advantage on 0242 224340, or write to them at 56, Bath Rd, Cheltenham, GL53 7HJ.

CAL.COM



An instant calendar print out is yours when you type in CAL. followed by a year

This one is for the historians mentioned in the introduction. Quite simply to use the program you type CAL followed by the year, or if you want to be more specific, the month (as in 10 for October) and then the year. Press

[RETURN] and that year in full will appear on your PCW screen, neatly tabulated and ready to dump to the page. By the way, if you press [ALT]+P hitting the [RETURN] key you will get an automatic printout. Remember to enter [ALT]+P afterwards to switch the printer off. CAL.COM is accurate from 1753 to 4001.

```
A>sort m:LIST.TIM
SORTV rev 1.3
++DONE++
A>
```

SORT.COM arranges lists of words into alphabetical order. It is the kind of function which can help you make up telephone and address lists

list, in first name last order.

The sorting process itself is invisible to the user. In fact the first you get to see of it is when a message comes up saying DONE. The actual sort procedure is done in the following order of precedence: first it looks for spaces, then for punctuation, then upper case letters, and finally, lower case letters.

All in all, a very useful little utility to have on your M: drive.

TYPE TEAMGEN.DOC



TEAMGEN.COM lets you keep a permanent record charting the performance of your favourite sports team

like to examine the coding. Unhappily, the version on this disc did not work. Advantage will replace faulty discs, and this reviewer has used the program previously on other PD compilations.

BANNER.COM / GOTHIC.COM

```
A>GOTHIC
TEXT-> HELLO FROM A UNIFIED ILFORD, THE WALL IS DOWN BUT WE'RE NOT
```

```
A>BANNER Hello out there let's party!!!
```

Reproduce text in large letters with BANNER.COM, or choose a simple gothic font for your work

large text. Its use is simple enough; all you have to do is type BANNER at the A> prompt. On the screen will come the word MESSAGE – you then press [ALT]+P followed by [RETURN]. This sets the printer on-line. Do the same to turn it off.

GOTHIC is similar in use. But don't expect writing a la Munsters; Gothic type is a fairly simple font. What you should get is a large message printed across the page. Ideally you require a wide carriage printer to get the best use from this (the program was not designed specifically for the PCW). In order to make use of your printer you need to set it to condensed mode by pressing [ALT]+P+O+P in that order. These are actually two of the weakest utilities on the disc.

Both of these files provide different print out techniques from the A> prompt. BANNER.COM allows you to print from the top to the bottom of a page in

TYPEWRITE.COM



Use TYPEWRITE.COM mid-flow to create a quick, neat memo

This is another one of those programs which is immensely useful when you're in the wastelands of CP/M and want to jot down a message or note for later use. The presence of margins and tabs make this a neater alternative than a pencil and paper

Setting the margins and tabs is simple. Two key combinations call up the relevant options; you are prompted for a number which locates the tabs and margins on the screen and page, and then you're off.

SPELL.COM

This really is handy if you are without a spell checker. The program takes ASCII files and moves through them looking for errors. Unlike its more expensive counterparts, this program does not stop at each word it doesn't already know and allow you to change, keep or ignore it. Instead of this, it creates a file with the suffix .LEX – the file is named by you at the A> prompt when you call the program up. All unrecognised words are placed in this file. You can then print it out and check through your own text for the incorrect words listed.

You must have a file called MASTER.LEX on the disc, or on the M: drive. There is already a file by this name on the disc, so there is no need to go through the hassle of creating your own. This file contains the actual dictionary itself, or at least the beginnings of one. You can add the .LEX files created while making a check by using the SPELL-ED.COM program which is also on the disc.

```
A>SPELL
Poor Person Speller (c) 1981, Alan Bonberger
Input file not specified or non-existent.
A>SPELL M:TIM.TXT (F)
Poor Person Speller (c) 1981, Alan Bonberger
0029 distinct words in text.
Enter lexicon file name (.LEX assumed) or 'return'
```

A .LEX file stores the errant words in a document, which you then check for authenticity

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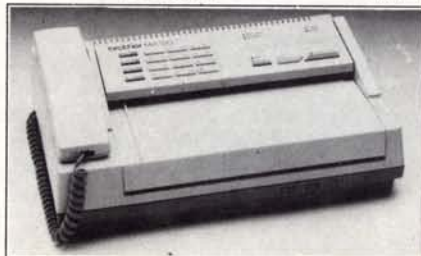
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First Class Mail



Can a spreadsheet smoothe out the creases in your administrative nightmare? Karen Donaghay transforms Cracker into a database ...

Mail order

LocoMail is a mailmerge program produced by Locomotive software and the retail price is £29.95. The number to call for further information is 0306 740606. Beware, though, it only works with LocoScript 2.

Mivor Smallbusiness is in a panic. It's that time of the year again: 500 bills to send out, and a mountain of other work piling up on his desk. If it wasn't for the fact that he's been using the Cracker II spreadsheet to work out his accounts for the past couple of months, he would probably panic. But, since he has, he can turn, instead, to the October issue of 8000 Plus to find out exactly how he can use his spreadsheet to carry out even the most stressful of mailout operations.

Let's take a closer look at Ivor's situation. The main panic factor for him is that he simply doesn't have the time to write out 500 envelopes. But what Ivor doesn't yet realise is that he has unknowingly picked an excellent choice of spreadsheet. Cracker II may be the hot favourite when it comes to financial

	Name	Address 1	Address 2	Address 3	Bill (£)
1	J. Jones	15 Jeremy Grove	Hartilton	Hampton	17.12
2	T. Stevenson	37 Osaston Road	Brislig	Knowle	56.55
3	P. Shallot	25 Latimer Road	Turnley	Mythall	43.00
4	M. Fisher	32 Floret Street	Hemley		9.00
5	D. Trick	86 Valley Road	Rodditch	Birmingham	123.33
6	S. Richmond	1 Munton Road	Fairfield	Buxton	674.30
7	G. Antell	43 Phillip St.	Headington	Oxford	37.00
8	M. Fisher	12 Thurston Ave.	Morely	Exeter	67.21
9	R. Marks	90 Park Square	Rylands	Lancaster	45.62
10	R. Owen	7 South Rd.	Suasea		66.60
11	S. Francis	5 Queen Street	Nottingham		45.00

Ivor Smallbusiness already keeps the details of his customers' accounts on a Cracker II spreadsheet. A mailout is now simply a case of adding a few standard columns.

juggling, but it can also do a fairly convincing imitation of a database. That means that Cracker can handle some of the tasks that you would normally require of a dedicated database; it can, for example, print out address labels

directly from the spreadsheet. Let's take a look at a small section of Ivor's spreadsheet - shown left - more carefully. We are not really interested in all the intricacies of his customers' money matters. The actual balance is worked out elsewhere; here we have just the results. Ivor has had the foresight to include the addresses of his customers in his billing list. It is going to be, as a result, quite a simple affair to produce address labels for his impending mailout. The next task would then be to write the letters. He already has a copy of LocoMail, and he knows that this can be used to send out a series of standard letters to various customers. With the help of Cracker, he can take a list of customers along with the amount they each owe and use it, with LocoMail to produce all of his standard billing requests. Read on to find out how.

Producing the labels

The first thing is to decide how to lay out the labels. This is straightforward enough: each label will begin with the customer's name. The value in the column marked 'Address One' is printed on a new line, then the 'Address Two' value is on yet another line, and then finally the city.

Let's concentrate on the new lines first of all. These have to be written into the spreadsheet; you can't just rely on Cracker to know where they are. Luckily, a whole column of carriage returns can be added in one fell swoop.

The first column of carriage returns will go after the first line, which in Ivor's case is the customer names in column B. To insert the new column, move the cursor to column C and type in the sequence [I]nser [C]olumn 1 [RETURN] [RETURN] [C]arriage return [RETURN]. This will insert a new column after the B column, with a carriage return included as an integral part of the column. Exactly the same type of column needs to be put in after the two address columns and, finally, after the city column.

Now we have the question of the labels. Labels to fit your PCW printer come in all shapes and sizes. The simplest to use are those which come as a single strip, but you can also print labels two or even three abreast. This is an excellent time saving tip for people who have very large address lists.

Let's assume for now that Ivor wants to print his labels out in a single strip. He needs to have a rough idea of how many lines can fit on each label. So far, there are four lines accounted for: the name, two address lines and the city line. If

they are 9-line labels he will have to add 5 more carriage returns, in exactly the same way, after the last line of the address.

This is so that, after printing each label, the printer will be properly aligned to print the first line of the next label in the correct place. If it isn't exactly right first time, then you can experiment by taking out or adding lines.

Stick with it

The PCW printer is not particularly fussy about what it prints on, and labels can be loaded onto the printer in just the same way as ordinary computer paper. The right hand printer spool is first moved inwards so that it is at the correct width for the labels. The top of the first label should be in line with the bail bar.

A trial run is usually wise before printing out the whole series of labels, particularly if there are lots of them. To print out the first three addresses in Ivor's spreadsheet, we would need to print out this section of the spreadsheet only. Cracker II refers to a section of the spreadsheet as a block. To define a block in Cracker, the location of the top left hand corner (in this case A3) and the bottom right hand corner (in this case M5) are entered. So, to print out these three addresses onto the labels, first type in [C]opy then [B]lock A3 [.] M5 [RETURN] [M]ail label [RETURN].

If the printer remains stubbornly silent, check that it is on-line by pressing the [PTR] key. The first word should be 'on-line': if not, move the cursor until it is over that word and press either the [+] or [-] key until it changes. Then press [EXIT]

	Name	Address 1	Address 2	Address 3	Bill (£)
1	J. Jones	15 Jeremy Grove	Hartilton	Hampton	17.12
2	T. Stevenson	37 Osaston Road	Brislig	Knowle	56.55
3	P. Shallot	25 Latimer Road	Turnley	Mythall	43.00
4	M. Fisher	32 Floret Street	Hemley		9.00
5	D. Trick	86 Valley Road	Rodditch	Birmingham	123.33
6	S. Richmond	1 Munton Road	Fairfield	Buxton	674.30
7	G. Antell	43 Phillip St.	Headington	Oxford	37.00
8	M. Fisher	12 Thurston Ave.	Morely	Exeter	67.21
9	R. Marks	90 Park Square	Rylands	Lancaster	45.62
10	R. Owen	7 South Rd.	Suasea		66.60
11	S. Francis	5 Queen Street	Nottingham		45.00

For the time it takes to add a few extra columns, those labels could save a great deal of writer's cramp. Producing labels from a Cracker II spreadsheet really is as easy as this.

and it should begin printing.

The next thing to look at is the printout. If the first line of each address, is aligned properly, but the next address is printed slightly further down the label and so on, then you need to delete the last carriage return from your spreadsheet. To do this, position the cursor over the column and use the [Z]ap [C]olumn option. Alternatively, of course, if the addresses are printed progressively higher, you will need instead to add another carriage return column.

Once you have set up the spreadsheet with the correct number of carriage returns, so that the labels are printed out correctly, the whole sequence of labels can be printed out by typing in [C]opy [A]ll [RETURN] [M]ail 1 [RETURN]. Now all that is needed to complete the mailout are the envelopes, letters and stamps.

Preparing letters

Even Cracker isn't clever enough to help out with the envelopes and the stamps, but it can do something about the letters. No, there isn't a cleverly concealed command that miraculously transforms Cracker II into a wordprocessor. It can, however, produce files which are compatible with wordprocessors such as LocoScript.

To demonstrate this, let's go back again to Ivor's customers. What would be needed in a letter to the customer is the name and amount each customer owes. This information can all be saved to a file. The name of the file must end in .TXT because this ensures that it is saved in a textual form which a wordprocessor, such as LocoScript, can understand. To really use this information fully, Ivor needs to use a mailmerging program such as LocoMail, a program which can put individual names, and other information, into a standard letter.

To save the names and bills of each customer into one file, they must be situated next to each other in the spreadsheet itself. Create a new column for the 'bill' information, next to the names, by moving the cursor to column C and typing in [I]nser[C]olumn 8 [RETURN][RETURN] OF [RETURN]. Then move the information into this column by moving the cursor to column G and typing in [C]opy [C]olumn [RETURN] [J]ump C1 [RETURN]. This copies the information into the new blank column. The result can be seen in the screenshot and is ready to save to a .TXT file.

To save the name and bill columns, type in [C]opy [B]lock A2 [.] C13 [RETURN] [F]ilename

In Name	Bill (£)	Address 1	Address 2	Address 3
J. Jones	17.12	15 Jereng Grove	Hartilton	Hampton
T. Stevenston	55.65	37 Osaston Road	Brislig	Knowle
R. Shailot	42.00	25 Jaltiner Road	Turnley	Mythall
F. Fisher	5.80	22 Flret Street	Hemley	
D. Trick	129.33	86 Valley Road	Redditch	Birmingham
R. Richmond	674.30	1 Munston Road	Fairfield	Buxton
M. Atwell	37.00	42 Phillip St.	Headington	Oxford
F. Fisher	67.21	12 Thurston Ave.	Morely	Exeter
S. Marks	45.62	30 Park Square	Rylands	Lancaster
B. Owen	66.80	7 South Rd.	Sunsea	
S. Francis	45.00	5 Queen Street	Nottingham	

The information needed for a mailmerge is taken from the billing list in Cracker II.

1st October, 1990.

Dear N.G. James,

Thank you for your custom and support over the previous six months. Your account now stands at £17.12 .

Cheques should be made out to 'The bits and bobs company', and sent to the above address. Alternatively, payment may be made in person at our offices in Bristol.

Our new pricelists are enclosed. Thank you for using our services.

Yours faithfully,

I. Smallbusiness

The Cracker II spreadsheet and LocoMail can join forces to produce this standard letter.

letter.txt . Once you have saved this information, the new column can be deleted by moving the cursor to that column and typing in [Z]ap [C]olumn [RETURN].

Using LocoMail

Now over to LocoMail - a program well worth investing in for anyone who sends out lots of identical letters. To load the information into LocoScript, first change disc, putting one which contains your new file letter.txt into the drive. Create a new document called Letters. Then choose Actions from the menu followed by Insert Text. LocoScript allows you to choose a file, so you must first put a disc containing your new file into the drive, then select the letters.txt file which you saved from Cracker.

The file appears on the screen, not surprisingly, as a list of names and numbers. The data is already in an understandable format as far as

LocoMail is concerned; it merely needs the addition of a template at the top of the data, to let LocoMail know what to expect. Type in name, bill [RETURN] / [RETURN] at the top of the page, and / [RETURN] at the bottom of all the data, and then save the file and exit .

The standard letter written in LocoMail is shown in the second screenshot. The list of names and numbers can be merged with this standard letter by using the program's [M]erge option. If you have installed LocoMail, then this is one of the options on the main Disc Management Screen. Letters is given as the name of the data file, and LocoMail happily churns out a letter for each name in the data file.

If you don't have LocoMail, a simple list of names and bills can still be printed from Cracker. Armed with this list, you can then simply edit a standard letter manually. It takes longer but is still a fairly reliable way sending out the bills.

```

: group 0 DATA .LOC Editing text.
ayout 1 Filz LSI CK40 LP6
l=Actions f2=Layout f3=Style f4=Size f5

```

```

name, bill
/e
J. Jones, 17.12 e
T. Stevenston, 55.65 e
R. Shailot, 42.00 e
F. Fisher, 5.80 e
D. Trick, 129.33 e
R. Richmond, 674.30 e
M. Atwell, 37.00 e
F. Fisher, 67.21 e
S. Marks, 45.62 e
B. Owen, 66.80 e
S. Francis, 45.00 e
/e

```

The information is soon transformed from spreadsheet columns to a LocoMail data file.

1st October, 1990.

Dear (Mailmerge(CMail)),

Thank you for your custom and support over the previous six months. Your account now stands at £(Mailmerge(CMail)).

Cheques should be made out to 'The bits and bobs company', and sent to the above address. Alternatively, payment may be made in person at our offices in Bristol.

Our new pricelists are enclosed. Thank you for using our services.

Yours faithfully,

I. Smallbusiness

The standard letter written using LocoMail can be used to produce a letter for every customer.

Red Letter Day

This has solved a large part of Ivor's problem. His bills have gone out and he can breathe a very large sigh of relief, put his feet up, and wait for the money to start flooding in. But can he?

In Ivor's case it isn't always that easy. There are those troublesome Richmonds for example. They owe him a hefty £674, and as Ivor knows, they always need at least two reminder letters before they cough up. So how can those labels be printed out again in a month's time, just for the customers who haven't yet paid their bills?

At this stage, Ivor should think about adding another column to his spreadsheet. It needs to be just 1 character wide and will simply contain a 'Y' for yes, or a 'N' for no. A 'Y' will indi-

cate that the bill has been paid, whereas a 'N' means the reverse. To add this new column, move to the first column of the spreadsheet and type in [I]nser[C]olumn 1 [RETURN] [RETURN] [T]ext [L]eft [RETURN]. Each location is filled initially with 'N'. When a customer sends in payment, their name is found, and the 'N' is changed to a 'Y'.

To make life easier when trying to find a particular customer, the names can be sorted alphabetically by typing in [S]ort C3 [.] C13 [RETURN] [I]nc.

Separating the non-paying customers from those in the clear can also be achieved by sorting. To sort the new Y/N column into alphabetical order by typing in [S]ort A3 [.] A13 [RETURN] [I]ncreasing [RETURN]. The 'N' customers will end up on the top of the pile,

as you can see from the screenshot. The section of customer you want to send letters to only extend down to row 5.

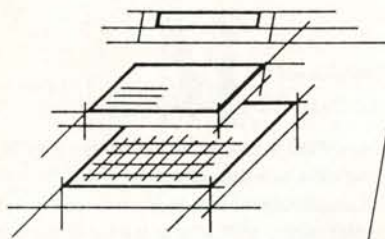
To print out the labels, simply type in [C]opy [B]lock A3 [.] M5 [RETURN] [M]ail 1 [RETURN] . ●

In Name	Address 1	Address 2	Address 3	Y/N
D. Trick	86 Valley Road	Redditch	Birmingham	N
R. Richmond	1 Munston Road	Fairfield	Buxton	N
F. Fisher	12 Thurston Ave.	Morely	Exeter	N
B. Owen	7 South Rd.	Sunsea		N
S. Francis	5 Queen Street	Nottingham		N
J. Jones	15 Jereng Grove	Hartilton	Hampton	Y
T. Stevenston	37 Osaston Road	Brislig	Knowle	Y
R. Shailot	25 Jaltiner Road	Turnley	Mythall	Y
M. Atwell	42 Phillip St.	Headington	Oxford	Y
S. Marks	30 Park Square	Rylands	Lancaster	Y

The Cracker II sorting option can soon find out which customers haven't paid their bills.



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9512	MS	2.95	2.80	2.66
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Epson LQ2500	F	4.73	4.49	4.26
Epson LQ2550	F	5.30	5.04	4.77
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1090-92, 1124, 1180-90	F	4.00	3.80	3.60
Panasonic KXP1524-40	F	6.90	6.56	6.21
Seikosha SP1200	F	3.44	3.27	3.10
Star LC10	F	3.44	3.08	2.92
Star LC24-10	F	3.50	3.33	3.15
Star ND/NR/NX15	F	5.71	5.42	5.14

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Sound Investment

David Frost looks at the upgraded version of Stockmarket 2

Stockmarket 2
£49.95 ● Meridian Software
081 850 7057 ● All PCWs

Stockmarket 2 is the latest version of Meridian's software designed to help plan investments and check their progress. More than 4000 people use the earlier versions which have clearly found a niche, both among the established investor and the newcomer attracted by the privatisation of major nationalised industries. Investment can be made easier, though not necessarily more lucrative, by a logical and organised approach.

Stockmarket 2 can help in two ways through its sub programs. The accounts program is used for keeping track of a portfolio while the prices program records share prices. The two programs can be used separately or linked together. In the latter case, share prices entered in a portfolio will automatically be transferred to the corresponding prices file, but not vice versa. Typically, you would use this for your own portfolio or perhaps for an imaginary portfolio you are using as a test for whether to invest. Unlinked prices files can be used for plotting the prices of shares not in a portfolio but in which you are taking an interest. The program will also keep a check on cash accounts.

Scripting and saving

The type of PCW places some restriction on portfolio sizes. 512k machines will handle 50 shares, 150 transactions, 100 dividends, 5 cash accounts and 150 cash entries. 256k machines are limited

to 40 shares, 110 transactions, 100 dividends, 5 cash accounts and 110 cash entries. Price files are limited to 50 shares (40 for 256k machines) and 260 prices.

Stockmarket 2 comes with a good manual and there is a useful help file available. The program is very user friendly. Installation on floppy discs is covered in the manual, but the program will run on a hard disc (see box below).

The accounts and prices programs run from separate main menus and the [F7] key toggles between the two. Usually one would start with the accounts program which is where all the records of transactions in a portfolio are kept. Shares are bought and sold using the transactions menu. The share name, date, price and number are entered and the program will automatically calculate the costs according to one of ten default values set in the housekeeping menu.

Most shares are bought at the market price through a stockbroker, but the program will cope with other methods of purchase. Privatisation issues are often sold in several instalments and are known as 'part paid' until the last payment is made. Stockmarket 2 will adjust price records so that they do not 'jump' each time a part payment is entered.

Scrip issues are made by companies who wish to reduce the cost of their shares for administrative or other reasons – the shareholder receives extra shares but the value of each is reduced so the overall value of the holding remains unchanged. A rights issue is one where the company wishes to raise more capital and offers existing share-



The main menu from which the accounts program is run. A similar menu exists for prices and is accessed by [F7].

holders the chance to buy at a discount. If you don't take up the rights entitlement, you will usually get a small sum of money when your entitlement is sold in the market. Scrip and rights issues are usually made on the basis of one new share for every X shares held and are entered in the program in this way.

Scrip dividends, which enable holders to take their dividend in shares rather than cash, are becoming popular and, for the purposes of entry in the program, should be treated as a purchase with no purchase costs. Rights issues and scrip dividends are a useful way of increasing the value of an investment without paying dealing costs. Some privatisation floatations include the incentive of what's known as a bonus issue; they should be entered as a rights issue where the price equals the market price on the day of the bonus. Once ➤

Fair exchange

One of the bugbears of any database is the effort required to enter the raw data in the first place. Meridian can help with this, and for £24.95 will supply a data disc containing five years' worth of weekly price information.

Installation on a hard disc

Stockmarket will run happily from a hard disc and this review was carried out using an expanded PCW 8256 with a 32Mb Diamond disc. The manual does not cover hard disc installation but the procedure is quite simple. Use PIP or COPYDISK to copy files from the installation disc to the hard disc. The six Stock.xxx files are essential and you will need the two Demo.xxx files if you want the demonstration program. The two Install.xxx files are necessary if you have previously used an earlier version of Stockmarket and want to convert the old files, but not otherwise.

Files for conversion must also be on the hard disc as Stockmarket 2 only

recognises drives a: and b:. Conversion of files on a floppy disc and simultaneous transfer to the hard disc is not possible. Before starting the copying process check there aren't already files with the same name for another program on the disc.

Making space

Even hard discs reach saturation point eventually, so delete the Demo and Install files using ERA once you have finished with them. It is worth making the program files disappear so they don't clutter up the directories in CP/M or LocoScript. Do this by using SET (eg SET Stock.*[sys]). The files will still run but

are now invisible to a simple DIR command and will not show in group 0 of LocoScript unless you select the "Show hidden files" option. PIP will not copy system files unless you use the [r] option and the hidden files will not clutter up your back up floppy. Irritatingly Stockmarket 2 will not recognise data files or the "help" file if the archive tag has been set. If you copy using PIP's archive function (eg c:=a:.*ac4[a]) then you will have to turn the archive off before further use (eg set a:.*ac4[archive=off]). Stockmarket can only be run by typing STOCK at the a>. It cannot be run direct from Diamond's file manager.

Sound as a pound

If you're thinking of investing, the easiest way to start is through one of the Government's privatisation schemes; these are specifically geared to the newcomer and both the price and method of payment are pitched to make the whole business as painless as possible.

you have entered the details of your share purchases and sales, you can enter the price/earnings (P/E) ratios and yields. These are a useful way of checking on the health of a share. Valid comparisons of P/E ratios can only be made

for companies in the same line of business. The yield shows how much income you would get per £100 invested at the current price, based on the last dividend declared. It doesn't guarantee you'll get the same next time.

The program will automatically update P/E ratios and yields when you update share prices. However, earnings and dividends will change from time to time, so you will occasionally need to check the values against information in the financial pages of your newspaper.

Prices will need to be updated regularly if you are to manage your portfolio properly. Professionals do this daily but most people will find a weekly update represents a reasonable compromise. Even if you don't bother to use the graphs as a buy/sell indicator, it is worth copying price information to a prices file – it takes no effort and may come in handy one day.

Dividends should be entered as they are received in readiness for producing an end of year statement to go with the income tax return. Don't forget to enter scrip dividends here, as well as in the share purchase menu, as they must be declared for tax purposes. Stockmarket 2 also enables you to keep up to five cash accounts. Deposits and withdrawals are easily entered and can be linked to share transactions and dividends if appropriate.

To enable you to make use of this information, there are various options for listing the account. The main differences between them are the way capital gains are expressed and whether P/E ratios and yields are shown. A third option is the gains listing which, as implied, emphasises the potential gain.

Stockmarket 2 calculates its gains on a strict mathematical basis and takes

no account of inflation. For capital gains tax purposes, inflation is taken into account by the Inland Revenue and your taxable gain will almost invariably be less than the potential gain shown in the listings. Some newspapers (*The Daily Telegraph* for one) publish indexation factors to apply to purchase prices when calculating tax liability.

The price is right

Some investors will be perfectly happy with the facilities so far covered, but the more adventurous may wish to use the prices files for working out what to buy and sell. Theoretically, share prices should reflect the underlying profitability of a company but, in practice, many other factors affect share price movements. Technical analysis attempts to predict when prices are likely to rise or fall. Stockmarket 2 only handles the moving average method of doing this.

When share prices are plotted there is the option of overlaying a moving average on the basic price plot. The average can be for any period, but 13 weeks is one commonly used. In very general terms, if the 13-week average starts to turn up, it indicates a signal to buy, while a turn downwards suggests it is time to sell. The serious analyst will compare different moving averages and possibly use point and figure graphs and the nine week low before deciding what to do. Neither of the latter are available in this program. It is also worth taking a look at one of the books on technical analysis before embarking on it as a method of deciding what and when to trade.

It is worth pointing out that although, historically, the stock market has been a good long term investment there have been spectacular crashes, either of the market as a whole, or of individual shares. Profits are not guaranteed!

Overall, this is a competent piece of software which will satisfy the needs of most investors. Serious technical analysts will prefer a wider range of analytical features and the ability to overlay price graphs for comparison purposes. ●



The housekeeping menu is used to alter default values and make changes to system parameters. In this illustration, share dealing costs are being set.



Logarithmic plot of the Bath Water price since privatisation. The smooth curve, starting in mid March, is the 13-week moving average plotted on a lagged basis.

Upgrading from earlier versions of Stockmarket

If you already have an earlier version of Stockmarket, it is well worth considering an upgrade especially if yours is the original program dating from about 1986. The original version is identified by the accounts files which have a .acc tail. From 1987 onwards, the tail is .ac2 and the program contained some significant improvements; it is, notably, much faster to run and has the ability to list dividends for tax purposes.

If you don't know which version you have, the easiest way to find out is to insert the data file in a drive while in LocoScript and the files with their tails will appear in group 0. CP/M's DIR command will achieve the same result. Stockmarket 2 boasts 50 further improvements which make it easier to use and increase considerably the range of facilities. Upgrades cost £29.95, plus the return of your old master disc and instruction manual.

Link about it

Probably the biggest benefit of the new program is the linking of accounts files and price files which avoids the tedious business of having to enter the same prices separately in the two parts of the pro-

gram. Scrip issues, rights issues and part payments now have their own entry mode and are added direct to the original holding. The requirement to use the old merge facility has mercifully sunk without trace.

This version also sees the end of the default options that always said 'no' when what you really wanted was 'yes'. There is a wider range of options for the way in which information is listed and you can sort the data into whatever order you wish. Another useful bonus is the ability to transfer data from one account to another.

The overall feel of the new program is similar to its predecessors but it seems faster to use and the menus are laid out in a much better way. Anyone familiar with the old versions should be able to master the new one in half an hour or so. Either of the old types of data file can be copied to the new format using the INSTALL program. A little planning is needed when you do this as portfolios in Stockmarket 2 take up as much as 51k, more than twice the size of earlier ones whose comparable upper limit was 19k. PCW 8256 owners with a lot of portfolios will need several data discs.

Stockmarket 2

Pluses

- ▲ Records share holdings, dividends and cash accounts
- ▲ Price movement analysis by moving average method.
- ▲ Useful range of report options

Minuses

- ▼ Dividend printout suitable for tax return
- ▼ Capital gains calculation doesn't allow for indexing

Ease of use	5/5
Documentation	5/5
Range of features	4/5
Performance	5/5

8000 PLUS value verdict 19/20

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PERIPHERALS AND ACCESSORIES

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PCW 8256/8512 owners who purchase a printer will also need an Interface and printer cable. We also strongly recommend LocoScript 2. For all PCWs we recommend Locomotive's Printer Drivers Disc and/or the 24 pin Printer Drivers Disc for maximum compatibility with LocoScript 2.

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DISC STORAGE AMS 10 (ten 3" discs) while stocks last £5.95

Perfect Pitch

Music Pad is the abridged version of Composit Software's Composer's Pen. Alec Rae staves off all interruptions as he prepares to put this potted adaptation of an old favourite through its paces ...

Music Pad

£22.94 ● Composit Software
0952 59543

To be able to produce music neatly, quickly and cheaply is the dream of many ordinary people, not just the creative genius. Therefore the move to bring out MusicPad, a less sophisticated, less expensive version of The Composer's Pen would seem to be the right one. There is a presumption in the MusicPad manual that the program will only be used by composers. In fact there would be an invaluable role for a music writing program in every choir, chamber group, music club or brass band – or any other group of people who read music. Music teachers and students, singers and/or accompanists would all find it useful. And there are certainly more of them than there are composers.

The Composer's Pen was written to cover all eventualities. Modern composers who change the key signature every three bars and the time signature twice a bar would have a field day. They would end up composing music just to use some of the more obscure features.

Many software packages have been created like this. An enthusiast lists what he considered his basic needs for a program. Bits are added, with a lot of complicated programming, to provide features that the average user wouldn't know how to implement.

This pushes up the price and makes the program less accessible to the beginner. For example the entire documentation for MusicPad is contained in a booklet about the size of the tutorial booklet for the Composer's Pen. The big program also has a reference manual three or four times larger.

Certainly all the documentation for

both programs is well produced and well written in a chatty, non-computerese style. They assume a fair amount of musical knowledge, but you probably wouldn't want to use the program unless you had a reasonable grasp of the basics of notation.

But the interesting question is when you are cutting back a sophisticated program, how do you decide what to cut? You have to be absolutely certain that MusicPad still does enough to cater for the needs of the average musician.

The differences

There are two ways of approaching a music writing program. The simple way would be to simply produce a modified graphics package with pre-drawn staves, clef signs and notes. Then you simply place the notes on the correct line or space.

The way Composit have tackled MusicPad is to approach it from the musician's point of view – making the computer do the computations that are so time-consuming and troublesome.

For instance, given the time signature, it is relatively simple for the computer to work out where the bar lines should come. This also provides an effective check on your work. The easiest thing in the world is to put in a crochet instead of a quaver. By checking the bar lines against other staves you can see where you have gone wrong.

But of course life isn't as simple as this. While MusicPad will work out where the bar lines should come, it also allows for instances when bar lines come at unexpected places.

So you have to build in the ability to enter unexpected bar lines. MusicPad is particularly good at this kind of thing, allowing for all the possible eccentricities of musical notation.

However the method does put restrictions on the way you work. Many times it would seem simpler just to use the 'graphics package' to get the music exactly the way you want it.

This is the first disappointment in MusicPad. The Composer's Pen can produce files compatible with Micro Design, Sketchpad II or Stop Press.

Some of the features that Composit have excluded from MusicPad are the sort of things you could add relatively easily with a graphics package.

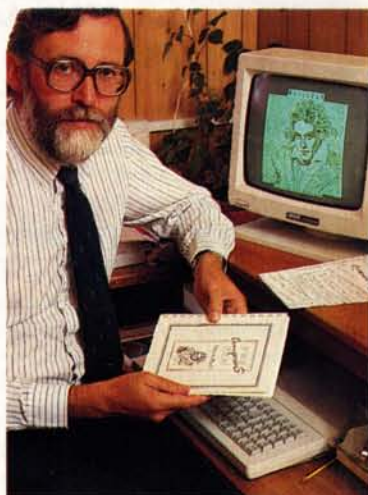
Waxing lyrical

Stuart Arnold from Melksham in Avon has been using MusicPad on his expanded PCW 8256 since it first made its appearance on the market at the beginning of July. When we asked him for his personal value verdict, the reply was unequivocal: "We're absolutely thrilled to bits with it."

Stuart went on to explain that although he had, in the past, been tempted to seriously consider The Composer's Pen, he had been somewhat put off by the price. Now he's glad that he waited a little longer for MusicPad matches his musical needs perfectly.

Religious Studies teacher

Stuart is an active member of his local church, Queensway Chapel. He is responsible for organising the concerted sounds of the small fleet of clarinets, flutes and trumpets which regularly participate in the Sunday services there. He finds that the program's rather sophisticated transposing facility constitutes one of its most important functions. He went on to briefly explain the principle of transposing: "If you have a piece of music written in the key



Stuart Arnold: no longer missing out bars with Composit's new Music Pad

of D for the trumpet or clarinet, it will sound the same as the key of C on the piano."

What MusicPad then goes on to do, if required, is to rewrite the same piece of music a note higher or, alternatively, lower, to accommodate other instruments. "Changing one note accurately and reliably across a whole piece of music is pretty difficult; inevitably, you make mistakes," said Stuart. He would hand round photocopies of handwritten transpositions to his players before the service and wonder why they were finishing before him; invariably he had missed out a bar.

Stuart reckons that the advantages of using MusicPad are exactly the same as those you get from using a normal word processor. "You can check things through on the screen before printing out; it's easy to mark blocks, copy them onto other staves and then transpose them. MusicPad is ideal; it's got just enough features for the type of work we're doing. The Composer's Pen has too many facilities we wouldn't even use."

Crescendo and decrescendo marks or phrasing could easily be added like this, and facilities such as horizontal displacement (the ability to move a note from side to side in the bar) could be simulated.

Of course it is possible to live without phrasing. Or you could write in crescendos manually once the music is printed out. It would still make for a far neater and quicker way of producing musical notation than writing the whole thing manually.

Serious omission

Perhaps a more serious omission is the inability to put notes of different lengths in the same chord. This has obviously been a bit of a problem to Composit. The Composer's Pen got round it by an ingenious method using two separate staves which were then merged.

Obviously it was not thought right that the penny-pinching MusicPad user should have the advantage of this ingenuity. But it is surprising how often that sort of thing comes up in reasonably straightforward music. And without the 'merging' facility you just cannot reproduce that music using MusicPad.

The lack of 'tuplets' may, or may not, be vital to you. MusicPad does allow you to handle triplets, but get into the quadruplets and quintuplets (which the Composer's Pen caters for of course) and you just can't do it.

The other main restriction is in the number of instruments you can include. The Composer's Pen was written to allow you to score even the most ambitious symphonies with up to 99 different instruments. MusicPad gives you four staves and that's that.

This is enough for most simple music, although it obviously wouldn't allow you to score for a four part choir and the piano part, for example.

How it works

The most obvious thing about MusicPad is that it is strongly influenced by LocoScript. The screens, the use of the function keys and the use of the Plus and Minus keys (on either side of the Space Bar) will all be familiar to LocoScript users.

Before you start you go into an instrument set-up screen, an area of the program far more logical in the more complicated Composer's Pen, where you can have dozens of different instruments. This screen seems eerily empty compared to its complicated bigger brother. A mere four staves to name and a mysteriously named Anacrusis function key.

This is where the problems of designing a music writing program become obvious. Anacrusis is where composers can't get organised enough to start the music at the beginning of a bar. Instead they have a fraction of a bar at the start.

However there must be an easier way of entering the number of beats needed here than in hemi-demi-semi-

quavers (a technical term for a really short note).

You then flip to the screen where you enter the notes. A part of the keyboard is set up to adjust the length of each note, turn the stem up or down, specify what octave it is in and enter any accidentals (sharps, flats or naturals). This is quite logical and simple to remember. If you do put a note in the wrong octave, a keystroke will adjust it to the right place.

With the other hand you place the note on the staves. This, it must be admitted, is more difficult. The keys QWERSDF are set up to enter the notes CDEFGAB. After a while you begin to start entering notes without reference to the manual but you can't help feeling that there could have been a more natural way to organise this.

The manual tells you that this is simply an exercise in fingering and as a musician you should easily be able to learn it – a sort of musicians' equivalent of "Pull yourself together, man." Where this leaves singers is difficult to say.

Rests are entered by adjusting the length and pressing the Space Bar. There are opportunities to enter text all over the place either for instructions or for libretto (that's what musicians call the words) and it can produce all manner of double bar lines, bowing and pedal marks – in fact every musical symbol you can think of.

What's the score?

Beaming, the process of putting the little line along the top of several quavers (or smaller), is achieved by a simple, effective method although it is possible for things to break down under some circumstances.

Perhaps the two most valuable features are the ability to copy great swathes of music (composers always repeat themselves) and the chance to transpose pieces into another key.

The Composer's Pen has better copying facilities, in that you can copy music from another composition, but the copying command in MusicPad is very useful.

Transposing music into another key is a boring, thankless task. To be able to achieve it accurately, in seconds, could well be worth the cost of the program to many singers or accompanists.

Printing out is either in full size (visible on a music stand) or condensed (say for the conductor's score). It can either be draft or high resolution printing. But be warned – high resolution does take a bit of time. As the PCW only takes A4 paper, smaller than most sheet music, you don't get very much on the page. This means, effectively, that when the music is going fast you have a page to turn every four to five seconds.

MusicPad has its difficulties, and is a little complicated to get to grips with. But it does so much, so efficiently that any PCW owning musician will find the effort worthwhile.



The eerily empty instrument screen with the mysterious request to enter the Anacrusis in hemi-demi-semi-quavers. Don't worry. It all makes sense really.



Entering the notes is easy and logical as long as you remember to press W for a D and D for an A.



How it looks. Handel's famous whoop-de-doo-dey chorus as printed out in high resolution.

MusicPad

Pluses

- ▲ Easier to get to grips with
- ▲ Well priced package
- ▲ Includes the ability to transpose

Minuses

- ▼ No phrasing or crescendo marks
- ▼ Only four staves.
- ▼ The method of entering keys is quite difficult to learn

Ease of use	2/5
Documentation	4/5
Features	3/5
Performance	5/5
8000 Plus Value Verdict	14/20

On the mend

London copywriter Ian Pemble finds out how to survive when the chips have gone down - and the guarantee has expired

There I was, sitting at my desk one afternoon printing out some advertising copy I'd just written on my PCW 8512, when a minor glitch occurred - the machine decided to print everything in bold. I swore and checked the codes [f1] to make sure I hadn't left a spare (+Bold) lying around in the copy, and tried again.

Once again it printed out in bold. This was getting serious. I went back to my original system disc and tried printing something from that. Still bold, only this time with a subtle variation - the printing head refused to cross more than half the page before returning. I tried once more and the head managed less than a two inch track before stuttering back to the left margin and beginning to chew the ribbon. I began to tear my hair.

I am a freelance copywriter specialising in recruitment advertising, which is to say an ad agency comes to me when a client company needs to fill a glaring vacancy in the corporate hierarchy and the ad has to appear last week. So I cut my losses and faxed the first (bold) print-out to the ad agency - with apologies for the delay. Then I checked the guarantee on the 8512, discovered it had run out four months previously and decided it was high time I had a good panic.

This accomplished (and pausing only to wonder how I would explain all that screaming in the toilet to my neighbours), I phoned Amstrad.

Service guaranteed

You see, I know all about this 'after-sales service' lark. I have written ads for photocopier companies, for instance. They have whole departments full of people who advise customers over the phone and ask a series of questions designed to identify the fault before sending in the engineers. Surely Amstrad would not be found wanting in such a crucial area.

Oh yes they would. The man I spoke to explained that photocopiers are usually hired, so after-sales service was all part of the contract. In my case it all depended on the guarantee ...

"Has it really? What a shame, and only four months ago? Well, well, it's a funny old world, isn't it." I asked about getting a replacement printer.

"No, Amstrad don't actually do replacement parts because we sell the 8000 series as a dedicated package, that's how we can do it so cheap, you see?"

I didn't, but never mind.

"I suppose a parallel printer might help," he went on. "But no, that wouldn't be any use because of course you need to have the original printer still in the circuit, don't you."

Did I? And what's a parallel printer anyway? My original printer used to print lines that were pretty parallel. What is this bloke on about?

My attention slowly drifted while he drivelled on. It was beginning to look as if my best bet would be to find another duff 8512 and cannibalise the printer.

"... Dictaphone's the answer," insisted the Amstrad man.

I've got a busted printer and he's trying to sell me a Dictaphone? The man was clearly raving. I politely disengaged from the conversation and rang off. Poor chap.

Carriage returns

I would have had another panic at that point only Terry, my flat mate, had just come home from work. When you work at home, sharing a flat isn't always a good idea. And although it wasn't his fault, Terry had been getting under my feet a bit recently. He was sharing my TV because his had blown up and been carted off for repairs three weeks ago. Furthermore, being an Engineer, he was bound to come up with some perfectly fatuous advice couched in deeply patronising tones. I told him the problem and winced in anticipation.

"Why don't you use your old typewriter?" he asked. "You stored it in my room because you didn't have enough space, remember?"

Of course! Good old typewriter: tried, trusty and true. Something to fall back on when hi-tech is brought low. And good old Terry for remembering. He fetched it, an Imperial 65 that was probably older than me. Sitting on the table it looked comfortably solid yet somehow different.

Terry made another trip and returned with the carriage, which he'd had to take off in order to fit the machine into his cupboard.

Neither of us could get it back on properly. I spent a sleepless night.

Tentative enquiries

First thing in the morning I phoned the shop, Wagstaff Office Equipment.

"We don't sell those," they said, "you must have bought it somewhere else - Dixons most likely"

I checked the receipt and phoned them back.

"Did we really? Fancy that! What? After sales service? With an Amstrad? Ho ho, that's a good 'un, Sir. That's made my day that 'as, har har."

Oh well, if Dixons are the experts why not ask them? I rang up but they too started talking about Dictaphones - like the man at Amstrad. Slowly the message got through. It seems Dictaphone is also the name of a Service & Repair outfit. Soppo name, if you ask me - but I phoned them anyway.

"Do you have a contract with us, Sir? Oh dear, in that case there will be a special charge for the call out ... unless you'd like to join ... and then there's VAT ..."

This was beginning to look expensive, but



"I checked the guarantee on the 8512, discovered it had run out...and decided it was time for a good panic."

what choice did I have? It was Thursday afternoon. I had to have something to produce words with by Monday morning or I'd have to turn work away. Who else was there besides Dictaphone? Hang on, someone I had talked to had mentioned a company called Mastercare ...

Doctor in the house

Their man arrived promptly at 8.30 the next morning. He checked that there were no hidden (+Bold)s gumming up the works and agreed with me that the printer was at fault.

"Almost certainly the driver mechanism, Sir."

"Okay. Fine. Um. Would you like a coffee?"

"No thank you, Sir."

I made some anyway. He beavered away like billyo and emerged from the machine clutching the driver mechanism.

"I've got an 8256 driver in the van, but I'm not sure about an 8512. Still, it's worth a try."

I nodded eagerly and banged my front teeth on my coffee cup.

He paused. "There's something else I can try while I'm at it," he said mysteriously, and disappeared through the door.

Ten minutes later and my 8512 was as good as new. "While I'd got it stripped down I thought I'd check the motherboard," he said proudly. "I knew I had one in the van and, well - it seems to have done the trick."

"Gosh, good job you thought of that," I enthused.

"It's good news all round for you, Sir. A new driver's fifty six quid, whereas a motherboard's only twenty."

In fact it was £20.25. He took 95 minutes and charged £45 for labour. Including VAT that came to a very reasonable £75.04. More to the point, I was once again able to earn my living and it was still only a few minutes past 10 o'clock on a Friday morning - about the time I usually get up.

That evening Terry arrived home to find me happily tapping at my keyboard.

"Got it fixed then?"

I beamed. "I remembered somebody mentioning an outfit called Mastercare, so I called them in. All fixed in record time. No expensive contracts or joining fees. Magic."

Terry gave me an old-fashioned look. "I think I was the one who mentioned Mastercare," he said. "They're the useless pillocks who've had my telly for the last three weeks."

NEW FROM SOFTWARE IMPERATIVE:

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THE WORD PRE-PROCESSOR

● FOREWORD is the new program from Software Imperative, the people who brought you FLIPPER. It's a tool for writers: not just authors (though they'll certainly want a copy) but letter writers, report writers, sermon writers – in fact, anyone who works with words.

FOREWORD bridges the gap between ideas and finished pieces of text. It helps you put your thoughts into words, without worrying where those words will fit on the page or what typeface they'll be in.

"BUT I'VE ALREADY GOT A WORD PROCESSOR."

FOREWORD isn't a word processor, nor is it intended to replace one. Word processors are tools for presenting text on paper, and most of them do this very well. FOREWORD is designed for the stage before this, the creative stage of writing where your ideas are still too vague or unstructured for normal word processing. That's why we call it a "word pre-processor".

FOREWORD is specially designed to stop you getting bogged down in detail as your document grows. With a word processor, as soon as your text takes up more than a screenful you start losing that all-important "big picture" – the overview of your work that's the key to good writing. FOREWORD's powerful "Hide" and "Show" functions give you back that overview. Even when you've typed in thousands of words you can still get a clear picture of your piece at the press of a key, collapsing the on-screen document down to its bare bones.

FOREWORD also shuffles ideas around far better than a WP can. The "Move" function lets you pick up an idea and move it wherever you like within the document, regardless of how much text the idea comes with. There's no block-marking involved: whether it's one sentence or a hundred, you can pick an idea up or put it down again with a single keypress.

"SO WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I'VE CREATED MY TEXT?"

Because FOREWORD doesn't deal with typefaces or layouts, you'll need to get your finished text into a word processor or DTP package before you can present it attractively on paper. Normally, transferring data from one program to another is a fiddly, time-consuming business, but FOREWORD makes the task quick and easy.

For one thing, there's no need to quit FOREWORD to use your word processor. FOREWORD is a pop-up program: it can share

memory with Locoscript 2 or CP/M, hiding "in the background" until you summon it. Just hit SHIFT-ALT-EXTRA and in 1 second you'll be looking at the FOREWORD editing screen. Hit SHIFT-ALT-EXTRA again and 1 second later you'll be back in CP/M or Locoscript 2, exactly where you left off.

Also, you don't have to save ASCII files in

FOREWORD and import them into your word processor. FOREWORD's "Transfer" function can force your text directly into a word processor document as if you were typing the words yourself. (Of course, if you find Transfer's 150-200 words per minute a little slow, FOREWORD is quite happy to save your text as ASCII:

it supports two different kinds, plus a special format for WordStar and NewWord users.)

SOUNDS COMPLICATED?

Don't worry: FOREWORD has a carefully designed menu system you'll be able to master in minutes. What's more, FOREWORD supports all those

special-purpose keys you're used to, like UNIT/PARA, WORD/CHAR and LINE/EOL. CUT and COPY trigger lightning-fast block operations, EXCH/FIND gives you speedy search and replace functions, and PTR summons the Printer menu. (We couldn't find anything for the RELAY key to do: FOREWORD reformats its paragraphs

automatically, as fast as you can alter them.) FOREWORD's even easy to install: it comes on a self-booting disk you can back-up and use immediately. No need to copy files or fiddle with PROFILE.SUBS – just switch the machine on, pop FOREWORD in the drive and it'll load automatically.

VITAL STATISTICS: FOREWORD has a fast, accurate word-counter, can edit up to eight documents at once, and has no maximum file size. It takes a minimum of 112K of RAM, and a maximum of 2 Mbytes – the most a PCW can be fitted with.

FOREWORD is fully compatible with Locoscript

v2.16 onwards (including LocoSpell, LocoFile etc), and with all legal CP/M programs. To run FOREWORD you'll need a PCW with at least 512K of memory. FOREWORD supports all SCA and Isenstein memory add-ons. For use with FLIPPER 2 PLUS, and with non-legal CP/M programs like Mini Office and Microdesign II, extra memory is essential. (FOREWORD won't work with earlier versions of FLIPPER, but you can upgrade these for free if you order FOREWORD at the same time.)

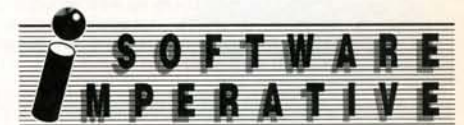
FOREWORD DOES NOT SUPPORT:

- File passwords and file time/date stamping;
- Foreign-language keyboards;
- Hard drives;
- Printers on external serial/parallel interfaces (though the 9512's built-in parallel port is fine);
- Single-density or single-sided B: drives (though 720K 5 1/4" or 3 1/2" drives are okay).

DON'T FORGET:

We still sell the absolutely essential FLIPPER 2 PLUS. This is the only utility that lets you split your PCW between CP/M and Locoscript 2 (or between two lots of CP/M – or even between two lots of Locoscript 2, if you've got the memory).

In as little as two seconds FLIPPER 2 PLUS can whisk you from one side to the other, without losing your place. Why reboot every time you need to get between CP/M and Locoscript 2? FLIPPER 2 PLUS can do the job quicker and better. (FLIPPER 2 PLUS requires at least 512K of RAM, and is fully compatible with SCA and Isenstein memory add-ons.)



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Comic Relief

Publishing, thank goodness, isn't always about being sensible all of the time. Nick Vandome takes some time off and shows you how you, your PCW and a spot of DTP can liven up your local club bulletin

Since writing is one of the world's more unpredictable occupations this may seem rather a rash claim, but I promise unconditionally that every reader of 8000 Plus is capable of getting their priceless prose into print. No, don't worry, this is not some dubious deal which involves you sending me vast sums of money (I wish) but rather a writing outlet that is

available to everyone: producing a fanzine for your local sports club or social organisation.

Fanzines come in all shapes, sizes and styles and by their very nature the content can include virtually anything about the organisation involved. This may be a major football or rugby team but equally there is enormous scope for producing fanzines for any club no mat-

ter how small, be it the local darts team or the All Star Village Dominoes Squad. If you are involved with a club of any sort there is the potential for producing a fanzine.

Although fanzines do not exactly rate alongside the Nobel Prize in literary circles they are widely read and the one I have been producing (for our local American Football team) has given me as much pleasure as any of my writing projects. But beware; if you undertake this seemingly simple task you will not only be a writer, but also a photographer, a designer, a printer, a salesman and a model, to name but a few. You have been warned.

In the editor's chair

If you are beginning a fanzine from scratch you will soon notice the first dramatic change from your normal writing life: instead of writing humble, obsequious letters to editors imploring them to accept your latest offering you are now the editor yourself. You are the boss. You are in charge. You have POWER!

After the initial wave of meglomania has worn off you will soon realise that editors are in fact a much maligned breed. True, you will be able to decide what goes into the fanzine and use your red pencil to banish certain ideas but you will also be responsible for chasing up contributors who have fallen behind their deadlines, you will have to explain to others why you are not going to use their masterpiece which they have spent their entire summer holidays writing, and, worst of all, you will be responsible for actually making sure that your publication appears as promised. Having done this for a few issues, and gained a few grey hairs in the process, I now have the utmost respect for editors and never again will I curse them, under my breath or otherwise.

With this in mind it is a good idea to gather a group of like-minded people around you, go down to the pub with them and call yourselves an editorial committee. This has a number of advantages: first, it splits up the workload, and second, it provides an opportunity to share the blame if things go horribly wrong and you are sued for millions. Finally, it is a good excuse to go for a drink. (This is not as frivolous as it

Mad dogs and Englishmen

One of the great benefits of being involved with a fanzine is that it allows you to do certain things for which you would normally be locked up. This recently manifested itself in the entire editorial committee of Sunday pacing the streets of Edinburgh wearing only shower caps, dark glasses and shirts with black stripes down the front. This produced an award-winning photo for our back page and proved that being involved with a fanzine is not only satisfying, but a hell of a lot of fun!

Bits 'n' pieces

Fear not, those of you who, like me, are slightly deficient in the whizz kid technology stakes, because a very reasonable-looking fanzine can be produced with the trusty PCW, the equally trusty LocoScript, a pair of scissors, a tube of glue and a photocopier for producing a fanzine (eat your heart out Blue Peter).

The first thing to decide is page size: I choose A5 because it is easy for people to handle and because when one page of A4 is folded over it gives four sides of A5, thus reducing your costs. For the text I use LocoScript in Pitch 17, with the margins and page length adjusted accordingly. Bold and Italics are useful for a bit of variation, as is using Pitch 15 when I need to fill some extra space. Once the text is written, I cut it out and glue it onto a page of A5. For the headings I use the public

domain program Printmaster G101.

This has a function for printing headings for stationery which is ideal for my purpose. It has a variety of fonts and also over fifty graphics from which to choose.

For the photographs I use black and white prints (colour can be used but don't photocopy well) and just stick any headings and graphics over the top. There are also sections that are partly hand-written - a style that you can easily get away with in a fanzine. For printing purposes photocopying is the preferable method in terms of both speed and cost. If you have access to a photocopier which collates and staples too, then so much the better. Once you have printed your fanzine it is a case of crossing your fingers and taking your masterpiece to your adoring public.

Sunday Bloody Sunday

The Fanzine of the Edinburgh Phoenix
Volume 1, No 2, Part 1, Spring 1.
End of season all singing, all dancing issue.



Sunday, Bloody Sunday: "Our fanzine has not only been a focus for the supporters; it has also created interest among the American football team that we write it about."

Sunday Bloody Sunday

The Fanzine of the Edinburgh Phoenix
Volume 1, No 1, Part 1, Spring 1.



Never heard of it!

'Fanzine' is a word commonly banded around in computer circles. Hesitant newcomers tend to nod knowingly at one another, often totally ignorant of the definition. Well, basically, a fanzine is a more modern, informal word for a society or group newsletter; it is a magazine, put together by a like-minded bunch of enthusiasts, often, in the past, of science fiction or pop music, funnily enough. So there, now you know..

may seem because a pub atmosphere and a couple of drinks is usually extremely conducive to generating ideas of a fanzine nature).

Words for your creation

The writing side of a fanzine is in some ways the easiest part and one of the great advantages is that it can be a pleasant break from your other writing projects: if you are busy writing a thesis on the impact of electromagnetics in the development of orbital satellites it can be quite relaxing to write something just for the sheer fun of it.

Although everyone will have their own ideas about the content of their fanzine, my own experience suggests that there should be a reasonable balance between serious and humorous material, and between straightforward text and 'space-fillers'. The serious content is usually in the minority but it gives you a good chance to deal with various aspects of the club including, results, team news, general developments in the relevant sport and any other burning issues of the day.

Despite the need for some news, the main reason people read fanzines is to be entertained and it is here that you can really let your creative hair down and release all your *Punch/Private Eye* instincts. Every budding Alan Coren will have their own views as to what is

funny but for a starting point I like to include a few features that connect the team, or individual players, to topical issues in the news. This not only provides you with a variety of opportunities (just look at some of the country's MPs and you have enough satirical material for a few volumes); it also enables you to connect the team with the rich and famous, a combination that the players always enjoy.

Writing send-ups of national institutions is another rich source of material but in this case it is best to take your starting point as something relatively serious: we once considered writing a send-up of the Sunday Sport but after examining the newspaper/comic (yes, contrary to popular belief it does occasionally have recognisable words and sentences) we found that it was impossible to make a send-up any more outrageous than the original.

In addition to feature length articles, humorous fillers are both fun to read, fun to write and good for presentation as they break up pages of solid text. These can take the form of virtually anything, including; lists, jokes, problem page, horoscopes, adapted pop charts and a humorous letters page.

Although in our first editorial we promised to be as unashamedly biased and frivolous as possible I believe that there does need to be certain self-

imposed guidelines to avoid upsetting too many people and generating massive libel actions. While we do occasionally poke the tiniest bit of fun at opposing teams we try to do this in as entertaining a way as possible and so far we have had no complaints or threats to our personal safety.

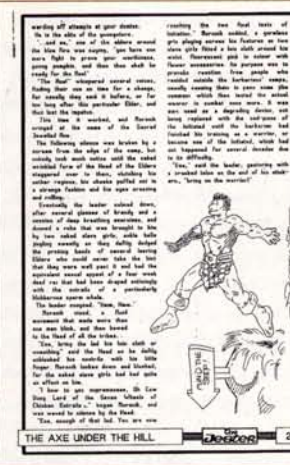
When the writing is over

Once you have written the text for your fanzine you can sit down, lie back and put your feet up - for about thirty seconds. The next of your seemingly unending tasks is to get illustrations to bring your potential Pulitzer Prize winning periodical to life, as even the most dedicated of fans can tire of reading page after page of solid prose. I favour a *Private Eye* type front cover with a heading and a caption and for this I use a photograph connected with the team and an added bubble of comment. To get these pictures you can either take them yourself or if there is a team photographer in any shape or form it is worthwhile pleading with, bribing or blackmailing him/her into using some of their photographs. Once you have your creation hot off the presses you are still faced with one more decision: whether to sell the fanzine or give it away free. Having done both I have come to the conclusion that it is best to sell it for a small sum, say, twenty pence. This not only gives you an income towards production costs but people tend to take something a little bit more seriously if they have paid hard cash for it.

Last word of advice

Alan Cunningham, who used to run a shop in Edinburgh that sold fanzines and sports programmes, believes that each fanzine is very personal to the club involved and that this is reflected in both content and style: "I have seen some fanzines that have been produced very professionally and others that have been handwritten," he said. "Since there is no set format you can set your own parameters. You usually find that fanzines can be critical of certain aspects of the club, but they are also very protective and will be extremely put out if anyone else voices the same criticisms." Alan also said that it was best to produce each issue only when you had enough good material. "I have seen a lot of fanzines that come out at regular intervals and sometimes it seems that they have had to put in sub-standard material just to fill it in time." This is well worth noting, but it should not be used as an excuse to put things off indefinitely. Whatever else your fanzine does it will keep you up to all hours of the morning, it will run up your phone bill, it will make you do some very uncharacteristic things, it will affect your family, friends and career prospects, and it will age you by at least ten years. But despite all this you will feel as though you have written a world-wide bestseller

Many a true word ...



Role-playing fanzine, The Jester, is bi-monthly, costs 60p and sells loadsa copies. And it's all prepared on a PCW 8512, using LocoScript 2 and MicroDesign II. Want to take out a subscription? It'll cost you £1.50 for three!

For the last 18 months, Staffordshire sixth former Alex Moseley has been co-editing The Jester, one of the largest (42 pages) and most design-conscious fanzines we've ever seen.

"It's written on good old LocoScript 2, then designed and printed on MicroDesign II; all the page formats, typesetting layouts, headline sizes and so on are stored on a disc so that each issue conforms to a set layout pattern. I print it on the good old PCW 8512 printer (I designed some of my own fonts which stretch the printer to its limits in terms of neatness!). Black rectangles are used within MicroDesign in place of artwork, so that the text flows around them. The black rectangles are then removed and the artwork added after printing."

We asked what, exactly, The Jester was all about. "Well," laughed Alex, "it's all about using your imagination to act out different characters in different situations - usually of a mythical nature." Ah, so that would account for the vaguely Tolkienesque, Dungeons and Dragons flavour of the whole thing.

Surprisingly, each bi-monthly issue of The Jester takes only two or three days' solid work to put together, relying on the input of five regular contributors (two editors, an artist, cartoonist and two writers. "There's always enough material to keep us going for up to 4 to 5 issues in advance," says Alex. If you'd like to find out more, write to Alex at 23 Dawes Close, Armitage, Rugeley, Staffs WS15 4BE.

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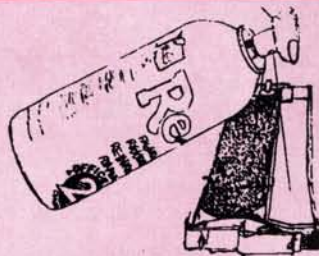


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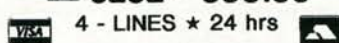
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That's Entertainment

The smell of the greasepaint, the roar of the crowd – it's all happening in Guildford with the help of a starstruck PCW. A hard act to follow?

Sophie Lankenau went along to investigate

Paul Wilson and his family share the living room of their Guildford home with a massive hi-fi unit, a keyboard, a synthesiser, a vast collection of cassettes, records and compact discs, a couple of guitars – and a PCW 8256. If this strikes you as the kind of overcrowding which has led to prison riots and inner city unrest, then you'd not be far wrong. And the reason for this excess? It's all down to showbiz.

Paul Wilson is an entertainer. Three or four nights a week – or more in the busy season – he packs up his guitars, amplifiers and backing tracks, and goes to pubs and clubs in the vicinity of London, Surrey and Middlesex. There, he sings, plays the guitar and tells the odd joke to the audience, then drives back home to Guildford.

The nocturnal existence which the entertainment business imposes on its representatives is a tiring but rewarding state of being. For Paul, after four years' experience as a solo performer, it is also a way of life. The successful solo artist, it seems, relies upon himself, and himself alone, to survive.

Not only must he be talented, he must also possess substantial business acumen. The only other thing to get in on Paul Wilson's act is his PCW, the tool of the trade which now, he feels, is as vital to his profession as his electric guitar and his repertoire of golden oldies.

Applausible choice

The PCW made its mark on Paul's business early on in the entertainer's career. Knowing nothing about computers, but enough to recognise their potential to add a professional touch to a steadily expanding enterprise, Paul obtained his 8256 by answering an advertisement in a London newspaper. He got it home, complete with the packaged LocoScript manual, and within a few hours had created his very first TEMPLATE.STD.

Now, there are few applications which Paul has not put to use on his PCW; from word-processing and accounts, to databases and desktop publishing – the PCW practically runs his business for him. "If it could play the guitar, sing and tell a few jokes, I could sit at home and count the profits!" he laughed.

The small businessman, whatever his trade, has to be as self sufficient as possible in order for those profits to start materialising. Paul has no manager or road crew, no secretary or accountants.

"There is nothing which either myself or the PCW cannot do to keep the business afloat," he told us. "I prepare my performance contracts in LocoScript, together with all the general correspondence which a business necessitates – I even have a couple of discs with all my jokes on them!"

Paul's stage act is a very polished, professional affair. He plays his guitar and sings to the accompaniment of backing tracks, which he records himself at home. He takes along more than enough material for an evening's show, so that he can adapt his performance to the audience present. "You never know what is going to go down well at a show," he says. "Sometimes people want all the slow, romantic songs, while

others want to hear rock and roll or hits from the Sixties. When you are in this business, you have to forget about what you like musically – it's all about what the audience want."

Doing the rounds

The lure of the greasepaint attracted Paul some fifteen years ago, when he joined an already established local band. "In those days, you could probably get about £30 each for an evening playing down the local. Obviously, the fewer there are of you in a band, the more money you can earn. As a soloist, you're in the best possible position, providing the bookings are constant," he commented.

Thanks to the PCW, the bookings are coming in at a rate of knots. "Having the machine has enabled me to project myself as a professional. I've designed my own logo and letterhead using MicroDesign and Masterscan ➤

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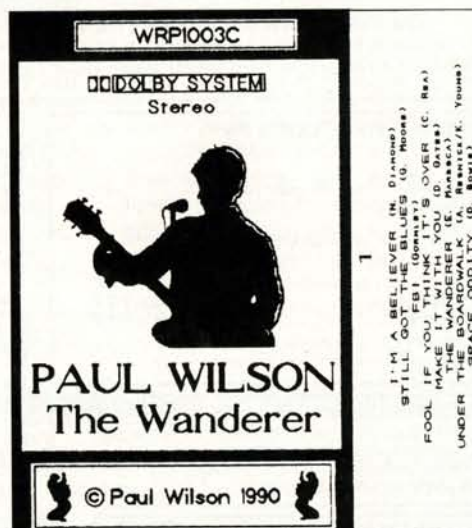
Paul Wilson will travel anywhere, within a reasonable distance, to entertain. He will consider most kinds of functions, so why not get in touch and order an evening of good music, popular songs and the odd joke or two?

Contact Paul at 75 Northway, Guildford, Surrey, or phone him on (0483) 578789.

Artistic impressions

One of the first things which made Paul decide to invest in his PCW was the need to produce professional looking personalised stationery. 'I realised that as good as a typewriter was, it was time to move on to something more powerful.' Paul bought The Desktop Publisher to assist him in his experiments with design on the PCW, but he didn't find it very satisfactory. 'It was OK, but then I discovered MicroDesign II, and things really began to take off.'

Paul produced his letter heading and logo using MDII and Master Scan. He sketched the figure out himself ('I'm quite handy with a pencil!') and then used Masterscan to scan the image. MicroDesign took care of the editing, and the logo was complete. 'I designed the cover for my cassette boxes in much the same way' Paul told us, 'only using LocoScript to reproduce the track listings. I am



Paul has combined MicroDesign with Masterscan to produce letter heads and cassette box sleeves

a great fan of cutting and pasting to get a complete image.'

Although Paul is delighted with the results from his efforts at desktop publishing, he has a minor gripe about Masterscan. 'It can be very tricky to operate' he explained, 'because the cable is so short. It could also have done with having a switch to turn off the light source – I'm not sure how easy it would be to replace the bulb if it ran out.' Other than that, the design tools from Creative Technology are more than adequate for Paul. 'The MicroDesign manual is

superb, very easy to understand', he added.

Creative Technology's new handscanner is something which interests Paul. 'I have heard a lot about it, and I'm amazed at the price. I was expecting it to be sold at well over £200, but as with CT's other products, the cost has been kept down. I expect I will buy it in a few months' time,' he told us.



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A complete implementation of the Standard Scratch Score and Handicapping Scheme (1983) as amended (Male only) Created in response to popular demand. Quick, simple and effective.

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- Similar to Book-keeping and Accounts
- Members ledger and journal
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- Includes Bar Takings control

"A gem of a system. Three alternative quotes for a system to do the job were each over £5000" Financial Advisor
"Ideal for the job" Golf Club Secretary

DDE ACCOUNTS (DIRECT DOUBLE ENTRY)

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- Single module system means freedom to post to any account from any source
- Allows narrative in nominal ledger
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"I'd recommend it to anyone" Chartered Accountant

INDEPENDENT STOCK RECORDS

£29.00
inc P&P

An all-purpose comprehensive system offering an immediate view FIFO based Stock Ledger, showing, base and selling prices, balances on hand at cost prices, Dues In, Dues Out, Re-order level, Re-order signal and calculation, plus priced analysis of issues and a complete stock list with valuation at cost prices. A sure winner.

With monthly Charge Account Invoicing and/or Job Invoicing.

£39.60
inc P&P

TELEPHONE HELPLINE DIRECT TO AUTHOR - JUST ASK FOR GEORGE CLOUGH.
GENUINE AFTER SALES ADVICE LINE AND SERVICE
MANX TAPES, GAREY VEG, GLEN AULDYN, RAMSEY, ISLE OF MAN.
TELEPHONE (0624) 813071



(see box), and because I've got the full suite of Locomotive's software, I can mailshot agencies and individual venues by the hundred at any one time. Using MIDI to record my backing tracks has really improved things, but having the PCW has made a great contribution to the efficiency of the business."

Although several of Paul's friends have computers, none of them own a PCW. "I get tired of computer snobs who run the PCW down, or don't take it seriously. You know if you've met someone who knows what he is talking about computer-wise when he appreciates the PCW. He might not own one himself, but he knows enough to realise the significance of the machine for home computing. It was a revolutionary piece of kit," he laughs, "as revolutionary as most things which Amstrad have produced, because it is simple to operate, looks good, and is still cheap. My nine year old daughter uses the 8256, and she's even had a go with MicroDesign."

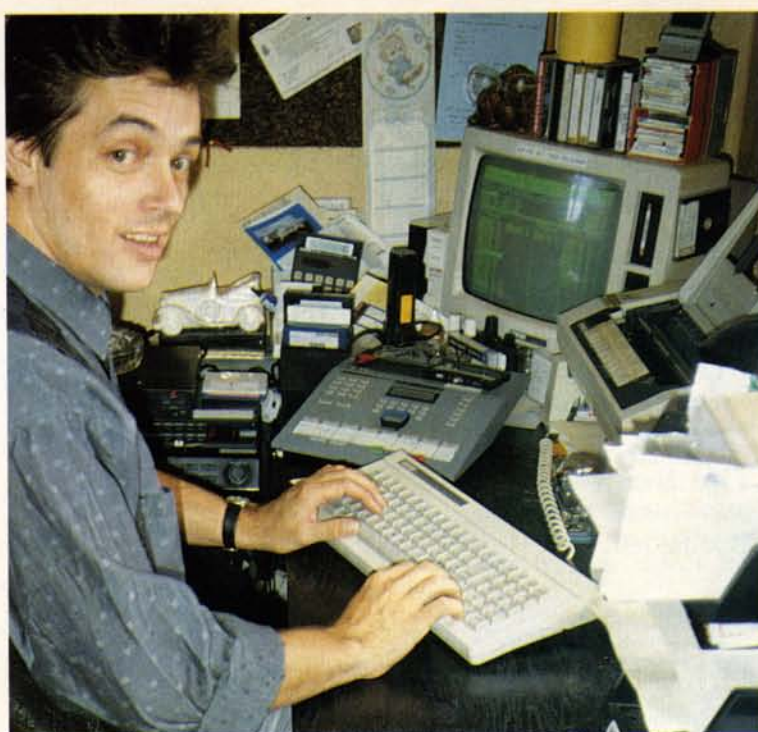
Good impressions

The MIDI equipment which Paul uses to record his backing tracks is able to reproduce the sound of almost any instrument. The 'piano' which Paul let us listen to produced a purity of sound almost indecipherable from the real thing. "When synthesisers of this kind started being used more universally, people became very sceptical," Paul told us. "The way I see it is, if you are an author and you use a PCW, does that make you any less of an author? Well no, it doesn't – it's a tool of the trade, and as such, makes itself indispensable."

Paul is quite clear about what makes people in his line of work successful. "First you have to be a businessman, and your talent as a musician must be second in your line of priority. I have always been self employed, so I knew a fair amount about business when I began, but the PCW has enabled me to learn even more."

Paul no longer needs to employ an accountant. "I use Money Manager for all the accounts now. In the old days, doing the books at the end of the tax year was a nightmare – three or four hours of scrabbling about with receipts and scraps of paper with calculations on them – it was terrible. Now all I do is load Money Manager and press a button. There it all is, done and ready." Had he considered using the upgraded version of the popular accounts package? "There's nothing much extra which the new one could do for me – I can live without bar charts and fancy diagrams!" he told us.

Paul's somewhat unconventional working hours mean that he is free in the daytime. But still he doesn't have time for any hobbies. "Basically, I use the time to sort out all the admin for the business, and I am always thinking about new material for the show," he told us. "The only thing I do which could be described as my hobby is play-



Entertainer Paul Wilson relies heavily on his PCW to help him run his business. He has exploited its potential in a variety of applications, from accounts to DTP. "If it could play the guitar, sing and tell a few jokes, I could sit at home and count the profits!" he laughed.

ing about with the old green-eyed monster there," said Paul pointing to the PCW in the corner of the room. "That thing keeps me occupied for hours. I love trying new things on it – I write the odd LocoMail routine, experiment with MasterScan and MicroDesign, and I go to computer fairs and shows whenever possible. I'm really hooked on it now!"

The yearn to learn

There are few things which Paul feels could improve his PCW. "If someone handed me a shiny new PC, I wouldn't take it. I know the PCW inside out, and to be honest, I don't think I would want to start learning a new system all over again. I'd rather improve on what I've got. I plan to buy a RAM pack for the 8256 because I could really use the extra memory space. I'm going to add a 3.5" drive as well, when time and money permit!" he told us.

The entertainment business is where Paul intends to remain for a few more

years. At 33, he describes himself as 'a bit long in the tooth' and says that he's 'a long way off from being in the Wogan league', but neither of these factors are about to deter him from his career. "Everyone in this business is looking for a break, just one lucky chance which will make them famous. The better the venue you play, the better chance you've got of being noticed by someone who counts," he explained.

Paul would like to concentrate more on writing new pieces of music and experimenting with record production. In the meantime, however, he is happy to continue as he is. "A lot of people believe that unless you get that big break, then there's not much to be made from this business. I don't agree. You have to be prepared to swallow your pride a bit, and just get on and play the music and sing the songs which the audience want. I love what I do, and I earn a comfortable living doing it. What could be better?"

Satisfactory arrangement

In case any of you are sitting out there, scratching your heads and wondering exactly what all this MIDI business is all about, well we're pleased to say that it's got nothing whatsoever to do with skirt hems.

The MIDI interface is a box which clips onto your PCW's expansion port at the back of the machine. It acts as an intermediary between the MIDI instrument of your choice (this could be a synthesiser, guitar-like instrument or drum machine, for example) and your PCW. The general idea is that these instruments, with the help of the appropriate MIDI software, work as extensions to your PCW. It's just like having a recording studio in your own home because

you can then go on to store the music that you make on disc on different 'tracks' just like a multi-track tape recorder.

It probably won't come as a surprise to learn that all this is available at quite a hefty price. MIDI synthesisers start at around two hundred pounds. Then there's the interface (£89.90) and the PCW Performer (ie, the software) for a further £59.90. These are available from Electro Music Research (0702 335747). EMR's ingenious system will only work with MIDI-approved instruments.

MIDI, incidentally, is an acronym for Musical Instrument Digital Interface.

The software: the facts

Money Manager costs £49.95 and is available from Connect Software (081 743 9792); MicroDesign costs £59.95 from Creative Technology (0889 567160); Master Scan (£69.95) from Database Software (0625 859333); this is only for 8000 series models. LocoScript (24.95), LocoMail (£29.95) and LocoFile (£29.95) are all available from Locomotive (0306 740606). Database Software have discontinued The Desktop Publisher.

Joining The Jet-Set

When your dot matrix printer just isn't enough, what difference can an inkjet printer make to your printed output and is it worth the money?

Karen Donaghay takes the Hewlett Packard DeskJet Plus for a test run ...

The price is right!

If £769 sounds like a small fortune, then how about a knock down price of £599 + VAT. Hewlett Packard are aiming to tempt the prospective deskjet market even further with the advent of the DeskJet 500 - a similar model to the DeskJet Plus, we're informed - with added enhancements. Sounds interesting? Read our Stop Press box at the end of page 49 for more details.

Laser days

The key to browsing around the laser printer market is to think 4 figure-numbers! Just for the record, the cheapest laser from Hewlett Packard is the LaserJet 2P which comes in at an eye-opening £1,199.

The DeskJet Plus

£769 + VAT ● Hewlett Packard
0344 369369

"Laser quality at a dot-matrix price...". Strong words indeed, but this is exactly what Hewlett Packard claim to be providing with their inkjet printer, the DeskJet. If these claims are true then the PCW owner now has the possibility of obtaining high class results without

having to take out a second mortgage.

That is not to say that a DeskJet printer is cheap - it isn't. When buying any major item such as a new printer, the pros and cons should be weighed up carefully; so when the DeskJet Plus arrived in the 8000 Plus office, it presented the perfect opportunity for further investigation. What we really wanted to know was how the DeskJet would perform with some of the best known PCW programs. To put it

through its paces, we linked the DeskJet Plus to one of our trusty PCWs and went about comparing its output - across a number of different programs - to that of the temporarily overthrown dot matrix.

First impressions

A cursory inspection of the DeskJet is sufficient to reveal that this is no cheap, tacky printer. The attention to design details, such as a recess for the cable so that it fits snugly against the wall, all help to inspire the user's confidence.

As far as the performance of the DeskJet goes, it is helpful to bear in mind that here is a printer which works in a completely different way to all 9- and 24-pin dot matrix printers. While dot-matrix and daisywheel printers produce their respective output through repeated impact against a printer ribbon, inkjet printers work by shooting ink droplets onto the paper from a cartridge. The only thing to hit the paper is a jet of vapourised ink. This results in virtually no noise; just the gentle swish of ink rather than a metallic clatter.

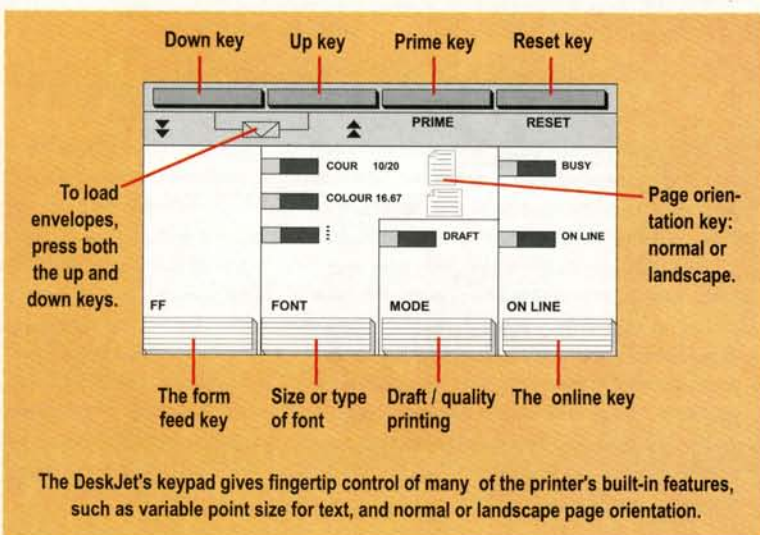
Quality is, of course, the most crucial factor when assessing the relative virtues of any printer. This is largely affected by the resolution (or dots per inch) produced. The more dots per inch, the higher the quality of the end result. The DeskJet works at 300 d.p.i., which is the same resolution as most laser printers, and quite sufficient - as you will no doubt notice - for producing professional looking pages.

Although basic print quality is the most important thing, the DeskJet does have other features which could be very useful to the PCW user. These can be accessed by using the keypad on the right hand side of the printer. For example, text can be produced in any one of three available sizes at the push of a button. The DeskJet's built-in font is Courier. In addition to this Courier font, there is a wide range of additional fonts available on optional font cartridges. These are slotted into the space behind the keypad and cost from £42.10 to £72.80 each. For the latter price, you can expect to get a particular font or typeface - there's a choice of 10 - over a wider range of point sizes.

Page orientation is also easily altered by using one of the buttons on the keypad. You can make your choice



A fairly up-market, impressive-looking piece of kit, we're sure you'd agree. Smooth lines, silent running - and nowhere near as heavy as it looks.



The DeskJet's keypad gives fingertip control of many of the printer's built-in features, such as variable point size for text, and normal or landscape page orientation.

from *page* orientation which prints down the page as normal or *landscape* orientation which prints sideways across it.

The printing debut

The first stage in the setting up of your printer is to attach it physically to the PCW. Since the DeskJet is endowed with both the parallel and RS232 interfaces, this should really be no problem. See our boxout (Crazy drivers, page 49) for further advice on how to persuade your PCW to talk to strange printers.

Preparing the DeskJet itself is a no problem. The ink cartridge slots neatly into place, and that's really all there is to it. In line with the professionalism of this product, there is also a brief self-testing routine. Switching on the printer, while holding on to the font button, will result in the printing out of a page of

text, demonstrating the different sizes and styles of the resident Courier font. This little exercise also performs the reassuring task of demonstrating that the printer does actually work.

The DeskJet paper-loading mechanism is well suited to an office environment as it's simply a case of sliding the paper into the tray. No special paper is required, and something like good quality photocopier paper should produce good results. The DeskJet can print on all kinds of different sizes of paper: A4, what HP call US letter size (8 1/2" by 11"), US legal (8 1/2" by 14") or even directly onto envelopes. The bad news is, however, that it won't accommodate A5-sized paper.

Unfortunately these changes cannot be made from the keypad but involve fiddling around with the function switches underneath the paper tray. Like

everything else, this is extremely well covered in the excellent manual which comes with the printer. These switches can also be used to allow the use of a completely different character set, allowing mathematical symbols, European characters and accents and all sorts of other oddities.

To start using your DeskJet, any software needs to be kitted out with a new printer driver. Thanks to the popularity of this product, all of the programs we used in our tests had either specialist printer drivers written for the DeskJet, or an acceptable alternative.

But the ultimate test for any printer is to see it in action. We ran the DeskJet with three PCW programs: the ever popular LocoScript II, the well-known DTP system MicroDesign, and the new handscanner, ProScan. See overleaf for the results. ➤

The Creative approach

For the Creative Technology team, producing graphic images is a vital part of the daily working routine. From their offices in Staffordshire came the popular MicroDesign desktop publishing program and, more recently, a handscanning package called ProScan which we reviewed in last month's issue of 8000 Plus. Consequently, it came as no surprise to hear that their main criterion when looking at printers is to obtain, first and foremost, a good quality graphics printout.

In the early days of the company, when MicroDesign was first developed, the team used a Star 9-pin printer. But, as Nik Holmes, one of Creative Technology's founder members commented, "The issues which later drove us to the DeskJet hadn't really arisen by then." Three years later, they have an array of printers at their disposal, and tend to use different ones for different tasks. Their original trusty Star 9-pin is still there, but now they also have a laser printer, and the Hewlett Packard DeskJet Plus.

The DeskJet first arrived in their midst on loan from the manufacturers. Creative were, at that time, busy developing their printer drivers, and this was just one of the models which they looked at. Having a printer on loan is obviously the ideal situation for a potential buyer, and the DeskJet subsequently emerged as one which could fit the specialised needs of the company.

Creative Technology were interested in investing in a "good, high quality printer, which was more reliable than the laser." They describe their laser printer as a workhorse: it can produce a large number of identical pages very quickly and very cheaply. The DeskJet



"We were desperate for a good printer," said Nik Holmes, founder member of Creative Technology.

cannot compete in this area, but they did find it far more reliable in producing a perfectly finished page. There are times when the extra ten minutes it takes to reprint an image can become devastatingly important. The more you work with images, the more often this is likely to be.

Black is black

The dot-matrix printers were found to be less than ideal for the requirements of the team. A major concern for their busy working offices was that they are far from silent. When more than one printer is running, the sound levels can become quite high and – as Nik pointed out – it is easy to underestimate the stress that a noisy workplace can create. In comparison, the DeskJet was a positively peaceful addition to their environment.

One area where the DeskJet came

into its own was in producing the ProScan manual. For a company in the DTP market, well-designed documentation is a necessity, particularly when it is produced in-house. The ProScan manual has a leading page which states that not only was the entire manual laid out using their own product, Micro Design, but that it was also printed using the Hewlett Packard DeskJet Plus printer. Nik explained that the DeskJet proved especially useful for the manual, thanks to its ability to produce a solid black.

Most printers are not capable of 'real' blacks, producing instead a dark grey. In order to create blacker blacks, an extra process is involved, called 'shooting to bromide'. This basically produces a new image which can then be sent

to the printers. Creative Technology can now skip this stage in the printing process altogether. As Nik Holmes told us, "Because the DeskJet produces a blacker black you can actually miss out the bromide stage." This was a particularly relevant issue for Creative Technology. "We now use it to generate master art work. It produced the ProScan manual and, and it will certainly be used to produce the next Micro Design manual." This was in fact one of the major factors leading to their purchase of the DeskJet.

But what about the more mundane aspects of printer purchase, such as on-going maintenance and after-sales support? Hewlett Packard do, after all, have quite a good reputation for this sort of thing. The previously garrulous Nik was, for the first time, lost for words. "I can't comment on that," he said. "Nothing has ever gone wrong with it."

The problem with Protext

Protext has a tailor made printer driver for the DeskJet Plus.

Unfortunately, no matter how hard we huffed and we puffed, we couldn't get it to work. Now, we'd like to make it clear that we're not saying Protext will never work with a deskjet printer. It seems far more likely that there was something wrong with the disc Arnor provided for our use. For the time being, we'll have to say that we'll get back to you on that one.

Coming soon-ish!

The next release of Micro Design will, we are assured, have a special printer driver for the DeskJet printer along with various other goodies.

A day in the life of the DeskJet Plus ...

DeskJet

Sumptuous Villas,
Pricey Street,
Upmarket,
Kent.

Dear Mr Bank Manager,
Thank you for your recent letter informing me that my account is rather overdrawn. I realise that 2,000,000 pounds may be a little excessive, but first there was that unfortunate ransom demand for my pet goldfish, and then, after enduring the trauma of that incident, my specialist recommended that I take a short holiday in Hawaii because, as you already know, my nerves are very delicate.

I hope to be able to pay off some of this debt in the near future. Luckily it is my birthday next week. I do hope you don't intend to cancel my pin number, as I like to go shopping late at night sometimes.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Pendthrift.

Mrs Pendthrift

Dot matrix

Sumptuous Villas,
Pricey Street,
Upmarket,
Kent.

Dear Mr Bank Manager,

Thank you for your recent letter informing me that my account is rather overdrawn. I realise that 2,000,000 pounds may be a bit excessive, but first there was that unfortunate ransom demand for my pet goldfish, and then, after enduring the trauma of that incident, my specialist recommended that I take a short holiday in Hawaii because, as you already know, my nerves are very delicate.

I hope to be able to pay off some of this debt in the near future. Luckily it is my birthday next week. I do hope you don't intend to cancel my pin number, as I like to go shopping late at night sometimes.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs Pendrift.

Mrs Pendthrift

The resulting page of LocoScript 2 printout is immaculate on the DeskJet. The printer's major benefit, however, is its quiet and speedy efficiency

LocoScript

The DeskJet printer has a standard printer driver in LocoScript which can be obtained on disc from Locomotive. What the manual doesn't tell you is that LocoScript has a variable pitch size

which, if it does not coincide with the pitch sizes built into the printer fonts, will produce some strange results.

The answer is quite simply to make sure the point size within LocoScript is set as closely as possible to that which

is available on the DeskJet. The pitch sizes available through the keypad on the DeskJet are 10, 16, 67 and 20 characters per inch.

If you have still not abandoned LocoScript I for the superior charms of



The ProScan-produced image is altogether clearer, cleaner and more professional after DeskJet treatment. Look, no splodges anywhere

ProScan

ProScan, as we saw in last month's issue, is a handscanner used to scan in images so that they are reproduced on the screen and paper. These images can then be printed, either independently or as part of a page produced, using a desktop publishing system. As a

sophisticated and extremely adaptable method for producing images, it is an ideal test for the graphic capabilities of the DeskJet.

ProScan has a DeskJet driver built into the original program, so there are none of the hassles of sending off for extra discs. The printer type can be set

by simply choosing the DeskJet printer and either the Serial232 or Centronics interface from the options menu.

The Results: The printing menu has a set of options for altering the way the image is reproduced. Through setting these correctly, the quality of output on



On the 1st October Mr Thatcher of Downing Street in London, came home to find that his house was no longer there. His former residence, had become one of the first to be taken over as part of the controversial Countryside Reclamation Scheme. The chief planning officer was

not available for comment yesterday, but the department did inform Mr Thatcher that the plans had been on public display in the Westminster Council Planning Department for some time. "I know the house was not actually our own", said Mr Thatcher, "but we have been there

for some years now, and I do feel that it has become our home." All that remains is a strip of earth. It is thought that the land will now be used to grow cabbages, although the tractor driver was not able to confirm this. "Err, I'm just following orders", he commented. The scheme will be reviewed in May.



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Similarly with MicroDesign output. There's really no comparison between dot matrix and deskjet results

MicroDesign

The task of producing a page from MicroDesign using the DeskJet was no problem, thanks again, to the hassle-free inclusion of an alternative printer driver within the program. There is not

a printer driver specifically for the DeskJet, but the LaserA option functions perfectly well.

The Results: Choosing the 'Quality' option to print out a page will produce

a resolution of 300 d.p.i. which is the same as the resolution available on the DeskJet. As with ProScan this gives an high quality, detailed image.

The DeskJet is so quiet that the noisy and irritating clatter of the PCW

LocoScript II, then this printer could be the thing to push you to the edge. The printer driver can only be installed onto a LocoScript II disc.

The Results: The final results are immaculate, but, having said that, the PCW printer already produces good quality printouts in LocoScript, especially with the 9512 daisywheel printer. The advantages to using a DeskJet printer for wordprocessing have more to do with its hassle-free performance and an increase in reliability and speed. The other major selling points as far as wordprocessing goes, are the DeskJet's ability to print directly onto envelopes and to print longways down the page. Its automatic paper-loading combined with a lack of paper jams and high reliability mean that it can be left overnight to churn out a mailshot or even the latest answer to War and Peace. Just make sure there's enough paper!

the DeskJet can be maximised.

9-pin printers, such as the PCW dot-matrix, print at a resolution of 240 by 108 dots per inch. (A ProScan page will be reproduced as an A4 page when printed at this resolution.) However, the DeskJet is able to produce a greater resolution than this – 300 d.p.i. to be precise. This enables the DeskJet printer to print a much sharper image. The page produced will be smaller in size (just over A5 size) giving an excellent quality image with good detail. To choose to print out in this way the ProScan "High-Q" print option should be chosen.

The fact that the DeskJet prints at 300 d.p.i. also enables perfect one-to-one scanning. The handscanner itself can be set to scan in an image at 300 d.p.i. It is then possible to print out this image, at the same size, on the DeskJet, by using the High-Q printing option within ProScan.

dot matrix printer can soon become just a bad memory. When printing out graphics this is no small advantage. It is also extremely reliable. Printing out a full page from MicroDesign is a long winded process for any printer, but at least once the DeskJet is set up properly, a perfect image can be more or less guaranteed every time. No splodges or other annoying flaws from this one.

The DeskJet is reliable enough to print a whole series of pages, while you go and do something completely different. In general a far easier printer to use than the dot matrix, and producing more professional-looking results.

Crazy Drivers

Setting up your PCW and your new printer so that they can successfully communicate with each other is one of the more problem-prone areas of printer technology. It can in fact be broken down into two distinct tasks. The first is to physically connect your printer to your PCW. The second is to persuade all of your software packages – including LocoScript – to send information to the new printer rather than the original, native one.

The first step is fairly straightforward. The new printer should have either an RS232 serial port or a centronics parallel port. The same applies to your PCW since the cable running between the two has the same connectors at both ends. Both types were supplied with the DeskJet that we reviewed so we chose the latter, the centronics parallel. Unfortunately, this is not an in-built feature of your PCW which has only an expansion port on the back of the machine onto which you must attach either an RS232 or a centronics interface.

The soft touch

The next part brings us to the thorny topic of printer drivers. The range of PCW-compatible printers available is huge and their character sets and style options – among others – are controlled by codes which vary from model to

model. This means that within whatever software you are using, specific information about what the new printer expects in order to function intelligibly needs to be included. This information is written into a part of the software known as the printer driver which is often located on a separate disc to the main program. You then need to install the printer driver onto your program disc.

There are several standards available so that software producers do not have to write printer drivers for literally every printer on the market. For example, a non-Epson printer is often said to be Epson-compatible: this means, in effect, that it will work effectively with a standard Epson printer driver.

The manual of the software you are using – whether it is a word processing, desktop publishing or database program – should give information on how to load a new printer driver; the process differs from package to package. Not surprisingly, since the PCW, as we all know, already has its own native printer, these drivers are often not included in the software. In such instances, a 'phone-call to the company in question will be the answer.

Locomotive Software for example will charge you £19.95 for their disc containing the deskjet printer driver.

And so to conclude ...

So what about that original claim that the DeskJet gives laser quality at a dot matrix price? Well, to be honest, it would have to be a pretty expensive dot-matrix, but that doesn't mean that this is altogether an unjustified claim. The DeskJet offers many of the advantages, while still falling well below the price of a laser.

The reason for the desire to buy a new printer is usually quality results. Well the DeskJet will certainly give you that. The tests opposite show that with a desktop publishing program such as MicroDesign the results are hard to beat. In a word processing environment, it also does well, although quality is not

a particularly motivating force here.

As upgrades go, this printer represents a fairly large step up the ladder. The satisfying thing is that in the case of the DeskJet, unlike many other inkjet printers, the PCW software producers have recognised its importance. If for you time is money, or even just in short supply, a DeskJet is going to be a boon with its paper loaded in seconds and its ultra reliability. If we are talking about an office environment, the whisper quiet printing operation is a definite bonus. Go for it.

The DeskJet allows you not only to produce more professional results, but work in a far more professional way.

Stop Press ...

Since we have begun writing this article, we've heard from Hewlett Packard that they will shortly be releasing a supersedant to the DeskJet Plus called the DeskJet 500. Basically the DeskJet 500 will be the same printer – good news for those of you who still require laser printer quality on a dot matrix budget – but with various enhanced features. It will come, for example, with four internal typefaces: CG Times, Letter Gothic and portrait and landscape Courier. Each typeface has medium, bold, italic and bold italic treatments. The use of kerning (the reduction of space between certain pairs of characters in display type so

that they print in an aesthetically pleasing manner) will improve the proportionally spaced CG Times typeface.

Other developments on the DeskJet front is the planned release, in January, of a new Hewlett Packard product scheduled to be available throughout Europe for use with all HP DeskJets: water resistant ink, would you believe? We're surprised that they haven't come up with this rather welcome innovation sooner.

The DeskJet 500 retails at £599 and comes with a 3-year warranty. Please call the HP Customer Information Centre on 0344 369369 for further information.

8000 Plus Value Verdict

Pluses

- ▲ Can leave your novel to print out overnight
- ▲ Very quiet and reliable
- ▲ DTP printout dramatically improved
- ▲ Easy to use once software is set up

Minuses

- ▼ Installing Loco 2 printer drivers was tricky
- ▼ Won't work with Loco 1
- ▼ Won't print out on A5 paper
- ▼ Comparatively expensive investment

Ease of use	3/5
Documentation	4/5
Features	3/5
Performance WP	4/5
Performance DTP	5/5

8000 Plus Value Verdict	19/25
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Com-Stax

THE ULTIMATE SPACE SAVER

"Interesting solution thoughtfully designed" says 8000 Plus

The new Com-Stax 8 Series is a unique stand that will stack your PCW 8256 or 8512 plus your keyboard and printer in under a quarter of a square metre of floor space. Its reclining monitor position and angled keyboard make the PCW even more user friendly. The Com-Stax is 98 cm high, 41 cm wide and beautifully finished in durable grey, white or black lacquer, the unit comes to you as a flat pack kit which is easily assembled in minutes with the allen key provided



THE PRICE: £35.00

PLUS VAT £5.25 and P&P £4.70
TOTAL £44.95

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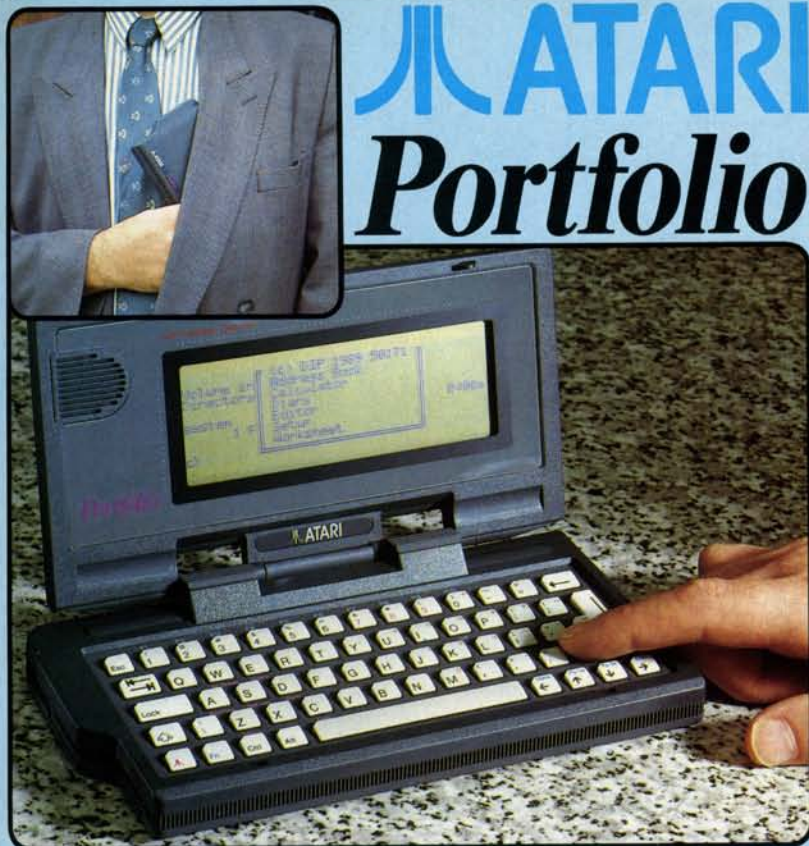


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I cannot let this opportunity pass without repeating my satisfaction with Money Manager. I am using it for the book-keeping of several small businesses. Before I retired recently after 40 years in banking, 24 of which were as a branch manager, I would have been delighted if my small (and some not so small) business customers had presented me with figures and statistics of their businesses as produced by Money Manager. It really is a program which, being so easy to use, could save many businesses from the chaos and disaster which can, and so often does, result from poor or non-existent book-keeping. R.A.L. (Cheshire)

Thank you for providing such a marvellous and easy to use program at such a reasonable price. No longer do we guess how much is where and no decisions are made without first consulting Money Manager. K.D. (Milton Keynes)

I think this is the best program that I use on my computers and I have tried quite a few programs! A.B. (Iceland)

I have bought the new Money Manager - and I think it is magnificent. The manual is so rare in the mass market: a well printed, clear, concise, friendly instruction booklet written for us amateurs who really aren't computer experts, and don't particularly want to be. I really do congratulate whoever listened to the market, and whoever wrote the instruction book. Well done indeed! C.P.G. (Hove)

I have been very pleased with the program, in fact it is an indispensable part of my business. My accountant is pleased and I'm sure it saves some of his fees due to the reports etc that I can give him. It's incredible that it can be so good at this price. L.P. (Walsall)

The program is perfect, just what I needed. If it were edible I would have a second portion. N.T. (Wilts)

I should like to say how pleased and impressed I am with Money Manager. It seems to me far simpler, faster and more flexible than any of the other accounts packages I have looked at. I have so far used it to prepare two sets of accounts for a small business, and am delighted with the results. R.D.H. (Yeovil)

I must say that next to my word-processor this has to be my most frequently used program and certainly has made an astounding change to our finances. All in all brilliant! Dr I.N.P. (Co Durham)

I would like to take this opportunity of congratulating you on an excellent program. I am treasurer of a local cycling club and the help that the program gives me in that job is tremendous, and impresses the auditors too! It is also very useful to be able to keep track of my personal accounts, and know to the penny how much I owe to the various credit card companies. Keep up the good work! J.F.N. (Wilts)

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PEEK Preview

Alec Rae has a crack at teaching himself BASIC with the help of two disc-bound tutorials

PCW: BASIC Tutorial

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It was only a matter of time. The PCW is an incredibly clever tool for handling text and yet we still produce virtually all teaching material on a subject like BASIC in books (or even magazines).

Anyone who has learnt BASIC from a book knows the problem. It is virtually impossible to visualise what the author is talking about while reading it in a book. Get the PCW in front of you, on the other hand, key in the example and suddenly everything is clear. The idea is as logical as BASIC itself.

The text in PCW:BASIC Tutorial is actually easier to understand than many books on the subject. It is written in a chatty, very personalised style with time taken out to add interesting asides, tips and jokes – more like a conversation than a lecture. The author even manages to stick in a little trick at the expense of the student.

It comes in the form of a series of BASIC programs. You run the program

and a page of text appears on the screen. You flip through the pages until you know everything about the subject in question. You can dodge back to the previous page or go back to the beginning of the lesson if you don't understand something.

At the end of each page you have the opportunity to try out what you have learnt and various programs and sub-routines are already loaded for you to study and play with. In one lesson, you are actually set homework – an idea that could, perhaps, have been developed more throughout the tutorial.

As with all BASIC tutorials, the real trouble is how to gauge the knowledge of the student. Do you always have to start assuming no knowledge of programming and a low IQ? PCW: BASIC Tutorial really does start with the basics. The first lesson is how to use PRINT and, let's face it, you can't get more elementary than that.

However, once the first couple of lessons are over (there are six in the tutorial) the pace begins to heat up until, at the end, you are fairly rocketing through the work. A couple of para-

graphs each for FOR NEXT and WHILE WEND could well be considered rushing things a bit.

The disc includes DWBAS – what the documentation calls a 'mini-extension to BASIC'. Old hands, who had to batter through the routine CHRS(27)+"E"+CHRS(27)+"H", needed in boring old Mallard just to clear the screen; will spit sawdust when they see these newcomers doing the same thing with #c.

The tutorial also throws in some fancy key-strokes (retrieving the last text entered and deleting the text, for example) which took the early pioneers several years of poring through TipOffs to master.

There are more advanced touches thrown in, although perhaps not enough to hold the attention of the experienced user. The beginner is also given some quite complex programming to study. This is probably the most encouraging thing about the tutorial. It sets out a philosophy of adding to your knowledge by studying BASIC programs – even if you don't immediately understand quite how they work.

All those people who learnt BASIC on the PCW from the old turquoise Amstrad BASIC manual and the listings from 8000 Plus will know how useful this was as a technique. In fact the only way that anyone could learn BASIC using the old Amstrad manual was by looking at listings in 8000 Plus.

The leading questions

One lesson is purely a series of questions and answers – the most common questions that the author has been asked: "How do I draw a circle in BASIC?", "What does DIM mean?" and "Is this your car, Sir?"

Here could be one weakness with the program. Although it starts in a structured manner, this breaks down pretty rapidly until it almost seems as if you are being introduced to the mysteries of BASIC as they occur to the author. Perhaps a more structured form would make it easier to remember.

It is also a pity that there wasn't a little more effort taken with brightening up the screen. The program talks about adding frills to your own programs ("Would the text look better in reverse?") and then presents the poor student with a pretty mundane screen of text. BASIC is a clever language and can produce a lot of clever effects. ➤

Join the club

PCW World is a user group which has approximately 1200 members. If you are interested in joining, or would just like some information on the organisation, send a stamped, addressed envelope to Gerry Austin, PCW World, Cotswold House, Cradley Heath, Warley, West Midlands, telephone (0384) 66269.

```
When I looked at the reserved word table there was one that I had never noticed.
I knew about RESUME but what was this other one RESUME 0?
The manual doesn't mention it. I'm not surprised!
I tried to put it in a program to see what would happen.
The program got there and became hung up completely.
Pressing STOP achieved what it usually does.

So I tried again, and tried pressing other keys. No response until I tried F7.
This caused exactly the same number of beeps as the letters that are set in it for this
program. It didn't like that. This time STOP lost Basic altogether!

So that's something totally useless I've discovered.
See if you can find out something more helpful.

The next lesson will be a question and answer session.
Hopefully somebody will ask the question you want answered.
OK
```

One page of the tutorial is a challenge to anyone to discover a use for the command Resume 0. You can't help feeling that asking a bunch of beginners isn't a great idea...

```
ABS 1      AND 26     ASC 2      ATN 3      AUTO 19     CALL 4
CDB 5      CHAIN 6    CHR$(2) 27  CINT 5
CLEAR 8     CLOSE 9    COMMON 8   CONT 10    COS 3
CSNG 5      CUD 11     CUI 11     CUIR 28     CUS 11
DATA 12     DEC 13      DEF FN 14  DEFDBL 15  DIR 18
DEFSTR 15   DEL 18        DELETE 6  DIM 17      DIV 28
EDIT 19     ELSE 26      END 10     ERR 20      EXP 3
ERASE 17    FEN 22       FOR 23     FRE 8       GET 9
FIND 21     HEX 13       HIMEM 8   IF 26       IMP 28
GOTO 25     INPUT 29     INPUT# 9  INST 30     INT 22
HLL 18      LEFT 30      LEN 30     LOF 28      LOG 3
LIST 32     LOAD 33      LPOS 28    LPRINT 34   MAX 35
LROM 27     MID 35       MOD 20     NAME 11     MAX% 28
MID% 30     MOK 28       ON ERROR 20  ON GOTO 26  OPEN 9
OC 26      OUT 28       PRINT 37   PEEK 37     POS 28
PRINT # 9   PRINT USING 38  PUT 9      RANDOMIZE 39  READ 12
REN 18      RENUM 19     RND 39     RESET 8     RESUME 20
RIGHT 30    RND 39       ROUND 22   RSET 9/42   RUN 41
SCN 1       SIN 3        STR 13     TAN 3       SQR 3
TAB 38      TAN 3        TIE 19     TIE 19      STEP 23
TIME 19     UNT 5        UPPER 22  VAL 13      SYSTEM 8
VERSION 28  WAIT 28      WRITE 9    WHILE 44    TIRON 19
WRITE 28    WRITE 9      XOR 26     ZONE 45     VAL 13
WID 45     WID 45      WID 45     CPM 46     WIDTH 45
WID 45     WID 45      WID 45     WID 45     WIDTH LPRINT
```

Everything you wanted to know about BASIC but didn't have the vocabulary to ask. This side of the disc would be of interest to even the most experienced BASIC user

PCW: BASIC Tutorial

Pluses

- ▲ A pleasant, sensible way to learn BASIC
- ▲ Chatty, interesting style
- ▲ Will appeal to even the most experienced BASIC user

Minuses

- ▼ Lacks structure
- ▼ Could do with better graphic illustration

Ease of use	5/5
Documentation	3/5
Features	2/5
Performance	4/5

8000 Plus
Value Verdict 14/20

Read all about it

You could easily team up this tutorial with Locomotive Software's book, *Mallard BASIC Introduction and Reference*, priced £9.95, and available from Locomotive on (0306) 740606. The book has a useful section on the Jetsam file handling system. This is one of the more navigable books on the subject!

Unfortunately, none of these are demonstrated in the tutorial.

The other main weakness of a computer program over a book is that it is more difficult to go back and check things. But the other side of the disc more than makes up for this.

It is simply a menu of every key word you are ever likely to come across in BASIC. Press the relevant number and there is an attempt at explaining it. Sometimes this is no more than a "I don't really know what use this command is" kind of statement but at least it allows you to ignore it and look at more useful things. The old Amstrad manual was never that helpful.

The final bonus is that the disc includes a tutorial on Jetsam - Mallard BASIC's neat way of creating databases. This was, for many years, the Amazonian rain forest of PCW owners - an area rich in potential but completely uncharted. Indeed, some explorers never returned. Things are not quite so bad now. Someone at Locomotive was kind enough to provide documentation which actually meant something. For the beginner, though, this tutorial is as good a start to the mysteries of Jetsam as any. A few years ago people would have killed to get it.

PCW: BASIC Tutorial is a great idea reasonably well realised. It might start a new craze in computer tutorials, making them more interesting to study, and more likely to produce results.

PCW: Peek and Poke £12.95 • PCW World 0384 66269

The introduction to PCW: Peek and Poke sounds a little like the Star Trek speech - "Boldly going where no PCW owner has gone before". Well not quite. But the documentation does carry the warning that this tutorial is not for everyone; so if you are the sort of person who thought that Peeking and Poking were a couple of puppet pigs on the TV you are probably not ready for this venture.

On the other hand, there are many people who have dabbled in BASIC who may drool at the thought of an accessible introduction to Peeking (the process of looking at information at a specific location in working memory) and Poking (inserting new information at that address). In the early days, the PCW did suffer from the fact that there has never been an accessible and/or systematic work on this subject. Even this tutorial cannot really be called a systematic approach - more a pleasant meander through the uncharted regions of the PCW's memory.

Peek and Poke uses the same form as the BASIC tutorial - except this time the format really works. This is probably because anyone plunging into Peek and Poke is doing it because they really want to know about the subject. The rather Spartan approach seems to suit

```

0      k
      It should ring a bell! It looks as though it may be the prompt that
      Mallard keeps giving. Maybe - it could be something else. In fact, if
      you had PEEKed at 5816 and 5817 in Mallard 1.29, you would have had the
      same result with an entirely different meaning!

      Let us test it. What happens if you POKE these locations with
      something else? Try:
      POKE 441,107
      POKE 442,79

      You see it all happening in stages! For the first time we have
      CHANGED the way that the computer operates, even though it isn't a
      particularly helpful amendment!

      f1 for previous section, f3 for hardcopy of this page, f7 for next section.
      ok
      poke 441,107
      ok
      poke 442,79
      ok
  
```

You may well be under the impression that Poking is a form of dyslexia - but rest assured, everything comes out OK

the subject. You have 15 chapters - each a BASIC program. By running the program, you are presented with a series of pages on a given subject.

In the early chapters, when there is a lot of simple peeking and poking to be done, you try out the instructions immediately. Later on, when you are tackling the heavy subjects like Assembler and machine code it becomes more like a lecture, page after page of complex text.

However, at the end of each chapter you are set your homework - sometimes quite complicated tasks that will allow you to prove to yourself that you understand it. There are 15 files with answers to all the questions but, of course, these are only of limited use unless you really understand what you have been taught.

One thing that you must understand from the outset is that Peek and Poke is not something which you can get to grips with on a Sunday afternoon, while watching the TV over your shoulder. To do it properly would take a considerable period of time and an even more considerable amount of concentration. The subject is not easy and even the most user-friendly tutorial will not make it so.

Do it yourself

The author himself points out that there are sections you are unlikely to grasp straight away. You may have to go back several times before it all slots into place - if ever. It is also true to say that Peek and Poke is not the most practically based guide to the subject. For instance, it doesn't list all the handy PEEKs and POKEs you might want. Instead it tries to give an understanding about how you would go about finding

your PEEKs and POKEs. The tutorial doesn't give you a map of the PCW's memory. It gives you the tools to create your own map. This is, at least, partly achieved by the style, which is geared towards helping you discover things about the PCW rather than teaching you. You are encouraged to do things and then deduce what has happened and why. This method can be quite frustrating. But, at the end of the day, you are far more likely to remember something that you have worked out yourself than something which you have learned under duress, parrot fashion.

There are a number of programs on the disc including a handy disassembler. There is also DWBAS - a mini-extension to Mallard BASIC which allows you to achieve all sorts of screen handling feats (clear screen, reverse screen, disable the cursor and so on) in a couple of keystrokes, instead of the long pieces of code usually required.

One fascinating chapter follows the author's voyage of discovery in working out how to achieve these wonderful shortcuts. Although this highly personalised style does help to make some heavy concepts quite palatable, it has to be admitted that there are times when the tutorial does descend into quite severe 'lecture mode'. This is perhaps due to the fact that the subject matter just cannot be lightened.

Peek and Poke provides a fascinating look at the powers of the PCW. It must be said, though, that it will take the average user a great deal of commitment and enthusiasm to complete the course.

First a bit about binary....

One aspect to gladden the heart of anyone involved in communicating information about the PCW to the public is the way PCW: Peek and Poke handles the hoary old subject of binary and hex.

Many's the book or article that has started with the fateful words "before you can understand word processing you really should know how binary

works." It would then go on, in a style as accessible as machine code, to confuse the bewildered reader forever.

PCW: Peek and Poke, on the other hand, starts its chapter on binary by saying "If you're not interested in binary, skip this section." It then goes on to give as simple and lucid explanation of the subject as you are ever likely to get.

PCW: Peek and Poke

Pluses

- ▲ Makes the subject matter accessible
- ▲ Chatty, interesting style
- ▲ Method of working out examples for yourself extremely useful

Minuses

- ▼ To complete the course needs a considerable amount of commitment
- ▼ Some of the subject matter may well be beyond the average PCW owner's field of interest.

Ease of use	5/5
Documentation	3/5
Features	4/5
Performance	4/5

8000 Plus Value Verdict	16/20
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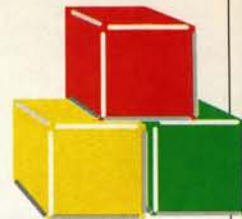
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Child's Play



Sharon Bradley looks at two brand new educational programs guaranteed to keep you and your children entertained on those long winter evenings

Junior Playtime £14.99 ● DGC ● 0274 636475

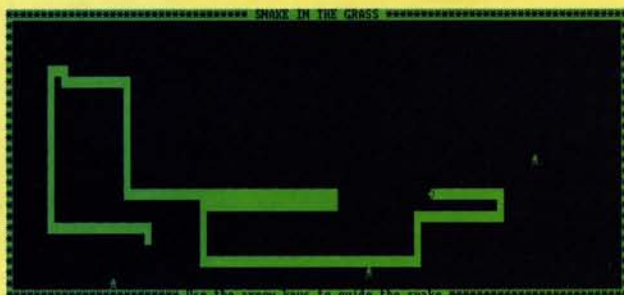
David Greenhough Computing has been responsible, in recent years, for the masterminding of a prodigious range of educational software for use on the Amstrad PCW. Junior Playtime and School's Out are their latest software releases, aimed, respectively, at four to eight-year-olds and seven to fourteen-year-olds.

In both instances, you're certainly getting value for money. Junior Playtime costs £14.95 and yet you get ten very professional games on one disc. We say 'games' but they're essentially learning aids which have been designed to provide as much fun as they do instruction. There's no dull, back-to-school feeling anywhere here.

The first game is called Match the Pairs. Not surprisingly, that's exactly what you have to do: find matching pairs of 3-letter words that



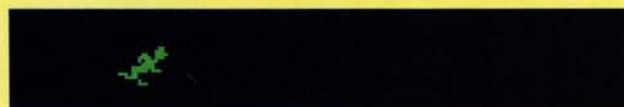
In Match the Pairs, you must remember where those matching 3-letter words are and just pair them up as quickly as possible. You can even edit the words used when it gets too easy.



With Snake in the Grass, you collect food by eating the scattered monsters. The more quickly you collect them, the more points you win. If you hit the side, run out of food or eat your own tail, it's curtains.



Junior Playtime offers the user over 500 different mazes. Negotiate your way (you're the little chap in the top left-hand corner), using the cursor keys, to the X which marks the exit.



Runner is for the very young children; a small sprite runs across the bottom of the screen.

have been randomly distributed across a 32-square grid. There are three levels of play; with the first, the player will be asked to make 16 pairs although only four different words are used. With level 2, 8 different words are used until, finally, at level 3, there are 16.

Younger users will benefit from the repeated display of certain words; older players will enjoy this game more for its memory-testing appeal than reading challenge. DGC have made the best use possible of the PCW's graphics capabilities; as soon as a correct match is located, the screen flashes brilliantly for a second or two before you are asked to resume. It's also interesting to watch the way in which the words slowly 'shimmer' onto and off the screen. We were impressed.

Snake in the Grass has been incorporated to test the motor skills. You must squirm your way around the screen like a snake using the four cursor keys. The object of the game is to devour as many of the small monsters which slowly pop up, one by one. This pastime, no doubt, sounds simple enough. You must do it, however, before your existing food supplies run out and without crossing over any of your tracks. Neither must you touch the side. Do any of these things and it's curtains.

Night on the tiles

The Word Scramble works on exactly the same principle as those rather irritating word or picture squares of days gone by; the word or image in question was 'scrambled' across a square of sliding tiles. One of the tiles was always missing so that you could twizzle them around, one square after another, to slowly form the whole picture. In Word Scramble, you are presented with the six-letter word which you have to form. The missing tile is represented by the large asterisk. All you have to do is form the word in question across the top row of the grid by moving the asterisk around. Again, Word Scramble is pretty addictive fun and will provide older children with endless hours of amusement.

Maze is also pretty good fun. Again, using the four cursor keys, you have to guide your unwitting intruder from one end of each maze to the other through a tangle of through-channels and dead-ends. The good news is that there are over 500 different mazes to work your way through, so the chances of your offspring quickly becoming bored with this one are suitably remote.

There's only one game on the disc with a distinct mathematical flavour to it. The computer selects a number between 1 and 99 without telling you what it is. You then have to guess what it is by keying in each estimate. If you are too low or too high, the program tells you so that you can re-enter your 'guestimate'. The aim is to arrive at the selected number in as few moves as possible. Easy really.

Junior Playtime has been exceptionally well produced. From a visual point of view alone, there's plenty to hold the attention of the younger audience. And invariably the options to both play the games at varying degrees of difficulty and to reverse out the screens concerned (so that they are black on green) have been included with each of the games. Junior Playtime is a winner: excellent value for money, high calibre puzzles and appealing to children of all ages. ●

Junior Playtime

Pluses

- ▲ Plenty of games to choose from
- ▲ Very easy to use
- ▲ Can 'edit' Match the Pairs
- ▲ Score sheet option included

Minuses

- ▼ Some games slightly more fun than educational
- ▼ No documentation

Ease of use	5/5
Performance	5/5
Range of Features	5/5
Documentation	2/5

8000 Plus Value Verdict	17/20
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School's Out £14.95 ● DGC ● 0274 636475

School's Out, DGC's 'sequel' to Junior Playtime comprises a group of five games which have been created with the average seven to fourteen-year-old in mind. It looks set to be every bit as popular as its precursor.

The five games on the disc are Hangman, Word Search, Junior Crossgrid, Four in a Row and, finally, Reversi. As with Junior Playtime, the program's creators have visibly gone out of their way to make the screen presentations as clear and as stimulating as possible.

The games themselves couldn't be simpler to actually get up and running and, wherever possible, extra options have been included to prolong their appeal. For example (as was also the case with Junior Playtime), you invariably have the choice – whichever game you're playing – to reverse out the screen so that it is black on green. This option can often make a restful and soothing change for the old eyeballs. With all of the games, there's a minimum of four or five different levels of game difficulty. It is precisely this flexibility which will ensure the popularity of the package across a wide age-span.

With Hangman, for example, there are five levels of play and the option of imposing a time-limit, the most leisurely of which is one minute for each letter. If you haven't made the right choice of letter at the end of that time, then the program will go on to construct one step of the gallows drawing on the right of the screen. The tightest time limit available is ten seconds for each letter in the mystery word. The more difficult the level of play, the longer the mystery word to guess.

And then there were four

Four in a Row is excellent fun and a screen simulation of that famous children's game, Connect 4, in which four consecutive counters of the same colour (you're white, say, and your opponent is black) must form a horizontal, vertical or diagonal line in a grid; it sounds simple enough, except for the fact that your opponent – in this case, your PCW – is attempting to do exactly the same thing before you do. You and the computer play on alternate gos to see which one of you can produce the desired result first.

Reversi, or Othello as it is most commonly called, is perhaps the most complex of the games on the disc and has, accordingly, up to ten different levels of game play to choose from. Again, you play against the computer. For those of you who are unfamiliar with the purpose of the game, there is a quick demo included on the disc; it has to be said that this is far more useful than the umpteen pages of disc instruction accompanying this particular part of the program. If you didn't know how to play Othello before reading their account of how to do it, you certainly won't afterwards. Stick to the demo.

No compilation of children's games would be complete without a word search. And, indeed, DGC have supplied them with a vengeance. They're sure to provide long-suffering parents with the perfect in-house amusement for those long car journeys and fractious birthday gatherings since the program can be used to generate – and send to the printer, if need be – any number of different search puzzles.

Whatever you want

The list of themes supplied with the program is impressive: there are boys' names, girls' names, seas and oceans, prime ministers (past and present) of Great Britain, presidents of the USA, mountains, rivers and islands to choose from; the list is endless. All you then have to do is choose whether you want the twenty or so words belonging to each theme sprinkled horizontally and vertically across the word square, horizontally, vertically and diagonally or, finally, the most complex of all, horizontally, vertically, diagonally and backwards.

Then, you just sit back and let the PCW do the rest for you. It's up to you whether you send the resulting puzzle to the screen, the printer or both. Whatever the presentation



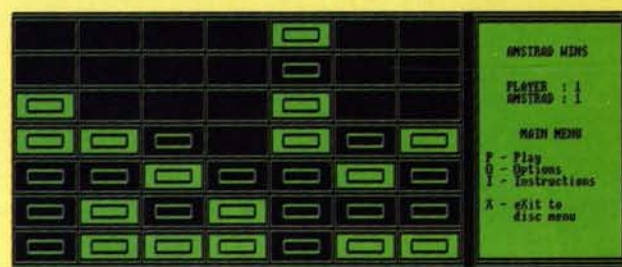
medium, you can be sure of plenty of variety with this option. And the computer compiles them all so quickly too. There's no danger of some of the more junior players running off to create some inner city riot somewhere while they're waiting for the puzzles to be drawn up.

The Junior Crossgrid was a new one on us. This consists of a rather unusual ready-made crossword in which numbers replace letters. Or, to be more precise, each letter in the alphabet is allocated a specific number so that each word in the square is composed of a series of numbers. It's then up to you to 'crack the code', as it were, and to slowly work out to which letters they correspond. Slowly, a conventional crossword begins to emerge composed of legitimate words. There are no clues; you just have to concentrate on decoding what's already there.

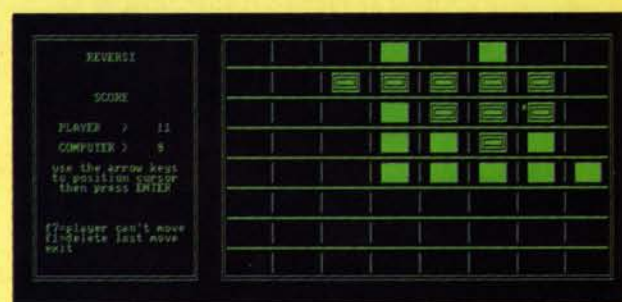
The overall flavour of School's Out is perhaps not quite so much one of edification as down and out fun. Like Junior Playtime, the program is simplicity itself to load and run and will be putty in the hands of even the most technophobic seven year old (if such a breed even exists). So, unlike the first program which was, of course, created for a much younger audience, School's Out could well be used without any adult aid. Again, good use of graphics, clean screen displays and a whole assortment of goodies to choose from. You can't go wrong! ●



Hangman has five levels of difficulty and a timer. Can you work out what the word is before the noose tightens? In this instance, I'm afraid ... er ... not.



With Four in a Row, you must endeavour to put four of your counters together to form a row or column – before the computer does.



Othello – or Reversi – one of the classic board games of all time, is included on the disc. There are ten levels of game play with this one and a spot of help in the form of a demo game and instructions if you need it.



Finally, the Word Search. Here we've got prime ministers of Great Britain going up, down, diagonally and backwards.

School's Out

Pluses

- ▲ Good selection of games
- ▲ Four or five difficulty levels for each
- ▲ Good use of graphics
- ▲ Challenging and fun

Minuses

- ▼ Documentation on disc.....
- ▼ ...and it's not very clear anyway

Performance	5/5
Ease of use	5/5
Range of Features	5/5
Documentation	2/5

8000 Plus	
Value Verdict	17/20

Listings

Never lose your LocoScript files again.
Karen Donaghay shows you how to keep things in order with a catalogue program

The trouble with saving your files on a wordprocessor like LocoScript is that, instead of cluttering up your desk with old unwanted pieces of paper, it is all too easy to clutter up your discs with unwanted files. There is no better time to spring clean your discs than now, and Catloco.bas is the ideal tool to help you do just that.

Catloco.bas is basically a catalogue program for LocoScript. It can get all of your LocoScript files in order and, better still, help you keep them that way. Having a catalogue of all your LocoScript files not only helps you to

spot the files which you no longer need, but it can also be the quickest way to find a particularly elusive file when you are in a hurry.

BASIC is a great language for producing utility programs like Catloco.bas, but, for many of you, the world of programming remains one of life's mysteries. To illuminate some of the tricks of the trade, later on in these pages we will be printing the first in a series of simple programs, just to show you how you can quickly and painlessly get started in Mallard BASIC.

Catloco.bas by John Gledhill

```
run
include TEMPLATE.STD (default 'y')? y
include limbo files (default 'n')? n
disc name (1-8 chars, 'end' = finish program): ? letters
disc name (1-8 chars, 'end' = finish program): ? shakes
disc name (1-8 chars, 'end' = finish program): ? end
print results (y/n)? y
date: 10th September
time: 5.45 pm
any comment for top: ? Test run for Catloco
```

Catloco produces the latest guide to all your LocoScript files

```
Program Catloco: 10th September 5.45 pm
Catalogue of LocoScript files
Test run for Catloco
Files marked ? are LocoScript but not version 2.
Names in lower case are duplicates.

Name Group Size
ACTS 12 shakes
SHAKES 000 LETTERS letters
BANKS 000 LETTERS letters
CHRISTIAN 00 LETTERS letters
HARLEY 001 shakes
HARLEY 002 shakes
STRELLS 000 shakes
STRELLS 001 shakes
HOMER 000 shakes
SHAKES 000 LETTERS letters
SYMBOLS 000 shakes
TEMPLATE.STD 000 LETTERS letters
Template file for letters group
Template file for COM group suitable for continuous stationery
WIRELESS 000 shakes

14 files
```

Read all about it! This catalogue of LocoScript files could cut out the detective work when searching for those elusive files.

Many people write programs for fun, and all too often their latest brain-child ends up on the shelf, slowly gathering dust. Not so with John Gledhill's program - Catloco.bas. He still uses it regularly, and it is easy to see why. This is a utility program with a mission; to reorganise your LocoScript files.

So what exactly does it do? Well, basically it takes each disc in turn, and searches for any LocoScript documents. You can have as many discs as you wish and the end result will be an alphabetical catalogue of all your LocoScript files (regardless of whether they are Loco 1 or 2 files). Alongside each file is the name of the disc it was found on and the file description. You are also given the choice of including limbo files and template files if you so wish.

To use the program you merely stack up your pile of discs and put them in when required. The program asks each time for the name of the disc. When

both sides of an A drive disc are in use you should include this in the name. Catloco can, unfortunately, only read from discs in the current drive. This means, in effect, that a separate catalogue must be made for B drive discs

Once you have reached the bottom of your pile of discs, you can end the program by typing in 'end' instead of a disc name. Before the program finishes, it asks certain pertinent questions, such as 'what time of day it is. It then proceeds to type out the results for you: all of the files on your disc collection, neatly arranged in alphabetical order, and with condensed text so that more files fit onto the page.

The catalogue list will show the exact location of each file (the disc name and the user group it is found in). It also prints a star beside LocoScript 1 documents. However, what makes Catloco a really useful utility, is the inclusion of the file descriptions.

```
10 ON ERROR GOTO 900:GOTO 110
20 'version 3g, Locoscript docs & descriptions; LS1 or LS2
30 '.....
40 ON ERROR GOTO 70' for nothing to KILL
50 a$= "catloco":PRINT"saving ";a$
60 KILL a$+".bak":NAME a$+".bas" AS a$+".bak":SAVE a$:STOP
70 IF ERR = 53 AND ERL = 50 THEN RESUME NEXT ELSE STOP
100 '.....
OE3C
1EF7
0860
151C
1080
16A9
1AA3
08B1
```

Four characters are used to identify LocoScript files : JOY + CHR\$(1) The fifth identifies the version.

```
110 DEFINT a-z:ids$="JOY"+CHR$(1)
120 maxfil=200:DIM finfo$(maxfil,5),ix(maxfil): filect=0
130 INPUT "include TEMPLATE.STD (default 'y')";opt1$
140 IF LOWER$(opt1$)="n" THEN opt1$="n" ELSE opt1$="y"
150 INPUT "include limbo files (default 'n')";opt2$
160 IF LOWER$(opt2$)="y" THEN opt2$="y":maxuser=15
    ELSE opt2$="n":maxuser=7
170 ls1=0 'whether any non-Locoscript 2 versions
ODC4
1B01
19B9
16E9
1883
237D
1A75
```

The array is set up for file information on line 140. The following lines set options to include or exclude limbo and template files.

For those of you who are not familiar with LocoScript file descriptions, be reassured: they are, in fact, very simple to use. The description can only be 90 characters long and is not part of the document itself; it is accessible from the disc management screen. A typical description for a letter, for example, would include the date it was sent and the name of the recipient.

You can add a document description

in LocoScript II from the disc management screen. Simply fix your cursor on the file in question, press [F5] and choose to **Inspect document**. You then have at your disposal 90 characters for your comments. These comments can later be viewed from the disc management screen in the same way.

In LocoScript I the comments are added from within document editing. Choose the **Modes** menu then select

Edit Identity Text to type in the comments. From then onwards, they can be seen from the disc management screen by simply choosing the option [F2] to **Inspect document**.

The inclusion of these file descriptions in the catalogue could make this program an indispensable asset. Catloco is a distinctly well thought out program, and one which is unlikely to sit on the shelf for too long. ➤

```

180 '..... main loop .....
190 PRINT
200 INPUT "disc name (1-8 chars, 'end' = finish program): ";dn$
210 IF dn$="" THEN 190
220 IF dn$="end" THEN 650
230 dn$=LEFT$(dn$,8);user = 0; locfiles=0
240 WHILE user<= maxuser
250 OPTION RUN;OPTION FILES STR$(user)
260 fl=1;fln$=FIND$("*",*,1)
270 IF fln$="" THEN GOTO 590 'empty disk/user
280 IF user <=7 THEN grp$ = LEFT$(FIND$("*",grp"),8)
290 IF user >=8 THEN
    OPTION FILES(STR$(user-8));
    grp$=LEFT$(FIND$("*",grp"),8)+" limbo";
    OPTION FILES STR$(user)
300 WHILE fln$>""

```

0B2C
047E
1B66
079B
0A28
0FEC
0D76
1692
0978
148E
1351

337F
0726

The name of the disc is read in on line 1010. For each user group, and limbo groups if specified, check for files.

```

310 PRINT",";
320 IF opt1$="n" THEN IF fln$="TEMPLATE.STD" THEN GOTO 570
330 IF RIGHT$(fln$,3)="GRP" THEN GOTO 570
340 OPEN "i",1,fln$
350 IF INPUT$(4,#1) <> id$ THEN 560 'not locoscript
360 IF filect = maxfil THEN PRINT"sorry, memory full";GOTO 650

```

0554
1B00
1179
0673
168C
2080

Check for template files. Skip group name files. Open the file and if the first four characters are not "JOY" + CHR\$(1) skip it.

```

360 IF filect = maxfil THEN PRINT"sorry, memory full";GOTO 650
370 filect=filect+1
380 IF RIGHT$(fln$,4)="." THEN fln$=LEFT$(fln$,8)
390 finfo$(filect,1)=fln$
400 finfo$(filect,2)=grp$
410 finfo$(filect,3)=dn$
420 finfo$(filect,4)=CHR$(48+ASC(INPUT$(1,#1))) 'LScript 1 or 2
430 IF finfo$(filect,4)<>"2" THEN lsl = 1
440 locfiles=locfiles+1 'count Loco files found

```

2080
097E
14CD
0AE4
0AE3
0A4C
192D
1013
189B

Check memory space. Save the file information then identify the version.

```

450 t$=INPUT$(90,#1);w$=""
460 IF MID$(t$,60,1)<>" " THEN t$=LEFT$(t$,60)+" "+MID$(t$,61)
470 IF MID$(t$,30,1)<>" " THEN t$=LEFT$(t$,30)+" "+MID$(t$,31)
480 FOR x=1 TO LEN(t$);x$=MID$(t$,x,1)
490 IF x$<>" " OR RIGHT$(w$,1)<>" " THEN w$=w$+x$
500 NEXT x

```

081D
1698
1677
101A
136D
048A

Read the next 90 characters - the document description, and change the spacing for a one line printout.


```

510 finfo$(filect,5)=w$
520 ptr=ix(0);old=0
530 WHILE finfo$(ptr,1)<=fln$ AND ptr>0;old=ptr;ptr=ix(ptr)
540 WEND
550 ix(filect)=ptr;ix(old)=filect
560 CLOSE 1
570 fl=fl+1;fln$=FIND$("*.*",fl)

```

0A0B
0850
202C
03FD
1174
045C
0C91

Add one to the file count, and adjust pointers to maintain an alphabetical record of the files. The current file is then closed.

```

580 WEND
590 user=user+1
600 WEND
610 OPTION FILES "0"
620 OPTION STOP
630 IF locfiles=0 THEN PRINT"no Locoscript documents";
640 GOTO 190
650 '..... now print .....

```

0409
080D
03F3
0906
0964
1D78
04CD
0AE0

Add one to the user group number and check the next group. When they have all been checked ask for another disc.

```

660 PRINT
670 OPTION FILES "0"
680 IF filect=0 THEN PRINT"no files found";GOTO 890
690 INPUT "print results [y/n]";yn$
700 IF LOWER$(LEFT$(yn$,1))<>"y"THEN 880
710 INPUT "date:";dt$;INPUT "time:";tm$
720 INPUT "any comment for top:";com$
730 LPRINT CHR$(27);"@'"resets to top of form
740 LPRINT CHR$(15);"Program Catloco:";TAB(50);dt$;TAB(60);tm$
750 LPRINT "Catalogue of Locoscript files"

```

047F
0918
1A3F
12E6
1170
12C2
1234
163D
1BB2
16E9

The entries for time and date and a comment are asked for. The first lines are printed out.

```

760 IF com$>" " THEN LPRINT com$
770 IF lsl > 0 THEN LPRINT
    "Files marked * are Locoscript but not version 2."
780 LPRINT"Names in lower case are duplicates.";LPRINT
790 LPRINT"Name";TAB(17);"Group";TAB(30);"Disc";LPRINT
800 x=ix(0);WHILE x>0
810 IF finfo$(x,1)=old$ THEN finfo$(x,1)=LOWER$(finfo$(x,1))
820 IF finfo$(x,4) = "2" THEN LPRINT " "; ELSE LPRINT"*";
830 LPRINT finfo$(x,1);TAB(17);finfo$(x,2);TAB(32);
840 LPRINT finfo$(x,3);TAB(42);finfo$(x,5)
850 old$=finfo$(x,1);x=ix(x);WEND

```

0D80
2665
1E6F
19CD
09CB
1C1D
1660
1616
1345
1019

The files along with their related information are printed out in alphabetical order.

```

860 LPRINT;LPRINT filect"files"
870 LPRINT CHR$(27);"@ "
880 PRINT"end of run"
890 END

```

11B8
09D6
0A15
0384

The number of files found is printed out before the end of the program.


```

900 ' .....
910 IF ERR = 62 AND ERL = 450 THEN RESUME NEXT
920 IF ERR = 62 AND ERL = 350 THEN RESUME 560
930 OPTION FILES "O";OPTION STOP
940 ON ERROR GOTO 0

```

```

0613
1421
11FB
1179
0933

```

How to type in a listing

Now is the time to delve into those hidden depths of your CP/M disc. This is where your BASIC.COM file is found, and to prod it into life is easy enough; just load your CP/M disc and type in BASIC. You should be greeted with a message to the effect that you are now using Mallard Basic, and an Ok prompt. You can begin typing in directly.

Copy in what you see in our listing. Every new line of the program must begin with a line number. These line numbers usually increase in jumps of ten. The longer lines of the listings may be printed over more than one line of our page, but don't type a return in your program otherwise the last part of the line will not be saved. The digits at the end, however, are merely part of a checking procedure which we publish from time to time. They are not part of the program, so don't type them in.

As you type in each line, check it carefully. It is best to try to catch any mistakes at this early stage, as they can be corrected very easily. The way to correct them is to move back across the line using the cursor keys and simply use the delete keys to erase the mistake. The correct version can

then be typed in, followed by a [RETURN].

At the end of your typing efforts, check that everything is present and correct by typing in 'list'. The program should appear on the screen. Rather than have it flash before your eyes, you can stop it scrolling by pressing the [F5] key. Press [F5] again to continue.

To correct any mistakes at this stage, you must type in EDIT followed by the relevant line number and press [RETURN]. You can then edit the mistake by using the cursor and delete keys as before.

Now for the moment of truth. Type in RUN and with a bit of luck your program will work first time. If not, there are still some errors in the program. Often there will be an error message, with a line number to help you, but if not check the program very carefully.

You can save your program for posterity by typing SAVE, then quotation marks followed by a filename. To reload the program from CP/M you must first load BASIC as before then type in the sequence: load "filename" [RETURN]. It can then be used, as before, by typing in RUN [RETURN].

But what does it all mean?

When you look at a program listing, what do you see? Chances are, if you are a non-programmer, these pearls of computer wisdom will strike you as completely unintelligible gibberish. You may despair of ever making any sort of sense of it but, before you throw in the towel at this early stage, remember that learning BASIC is akin to learning any new language. Your first reading book was more likely to be *Muffin the Mule* than *War and Peace*, and the same rules apply to learning the three R's of BASIC programming.

Fortunately, learning BASIC doesn't involve regressing to the mental age of a five-year-old. Some very simple programs can also be extremely useful, and they may even inspire you to write a few of your own.

Our first offering in the ABC of Mallard BASIC is this simple program from Keith Simons. It mimicks the process of using an adding machine (you know, the ones that cost fifteen quid in the shops). It adds up a column of figures, showing each figure you type in on the screen, with the running total in a right hand column.

[RETURN] should be pressed after each number is entered. To subtract from the running total, simply type in the figure with a minus sign before it – for example -9.99. You have the option of listing the results on paper – just press [Y] at the appropriate time.

A handy tip, to get those digits fair flying along, is to use the numeric keypad on the right hand side of the keyboard. Hold down the [ALT] key and press [RELAY] and, lo and behold, the set of figures on and around the arrow

keys can now be used to enter numbers. To switch back, hold down [ALT] and press [RELAY] again.

Back to BASICS

Despite popular belief to the contrary, computers are in fact very dumb. Every little part of the process must be considered and incorporated into the program. This is akin to telling someone how to boil an egg by saying, first open the fridge door, then take the egg from the carton and so on.

Let's begin at the beginning, in this case line 10. Line 10 is the simplest command in the book. PRINT means, yes, you've guessed it – print out what follows. This means printing on the screen, incidentally – not to the printer. The text within the quotes is copied, letter for letter, onto the screen. Line 20 works in exactly the same way as line 10 – printing out a question this time (or in computer jargonese – a prompt).

The program starts getting rather more complex on the next line. The command INPUT(1) will make the program wait at this point for the user to enter one character, in response to the question. The command UPPER will convert any lower case character to upper case; in other words, the character y will be converted to a Y. The complete line therefore translates as ... if the character read in is a y or a Y, then set the value of p to 1.

The actual numbers are typed in on line 40. The line itself reads in one number (which it then calls a#) by using the INPUT command. This number is then added to the running total, represented in the program as b#, by the

```

10 PRINT "Program to make an adding/listing calculator"
20 PRINT "Do you want a printout (press Y or N) ?"
30 IF UPPER$(INPUT$(1))="Y" THEN p=1
40 INPUT; a#: b#=b#+a#
50 PRINT TAB(30);b#
60 IF p THEN LPRINT a#TAB(30);b#
70 IF a# GOTO 40

```

This simple program mimics the process of using an adding machine

command $b\# = a\# + b\#$.

The running total, b#, is then printed in line 50. This time there are no quotes so the actual value of b#, the total, is printed out. The command TAB(30), not suprisingly, moves the cursor 30 characters, before printing.

In line 60, the program takes a look at the value of p. Way back in line 30, p is given the value of 1 only if the user answers yes in response to the question "Do you want a printout?" If not, p will default to the value of 0.

The complete line translates as the following: if p has a value of one, the program will oblige by printing out the latest number, and the latest total to the printer. (The command LPRINT works in exactly the same way as the PRINT command, except the result appears on the printer rather than on the screen.)

To read in the next number, and calculate a new total, the whole process can be repeated from line 40 onwards. This is achieved by the GOTO 40 command on the last line. The program finally ends when the user fails to put in another number.

Once mastered, all of the commands used in this program can be used again and again. To actually type in this program follow the instructions in our **How to type in a listing** box above. ●

Smooth operator

The keys on the right hand keypad can also be used to enter figures in LocoScript. Hold down the [ALT] key and press [RELAY] to use the keys in this way. Repeat this process to change them back to their normal function.

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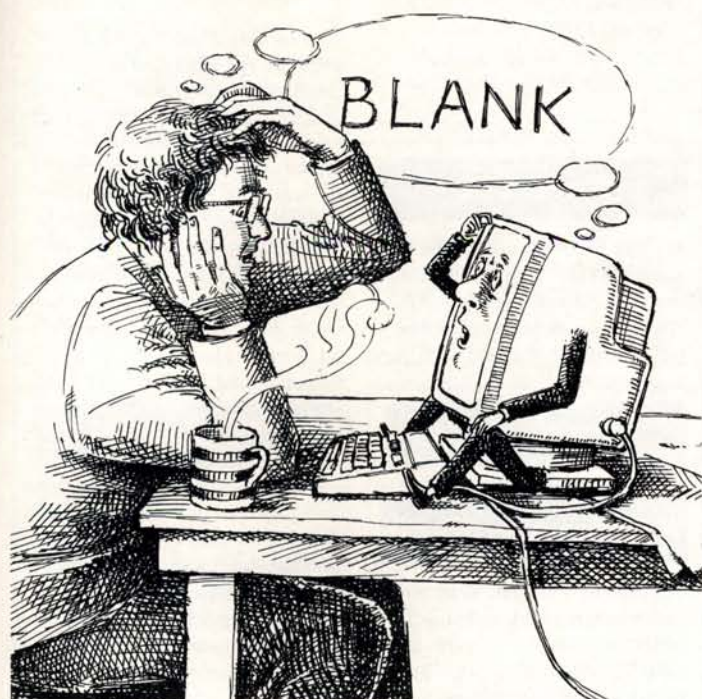
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LANGFORD

A page in the company
of David Langford



Getting it together

Writing is often a lonely business, invariably made even lonelier by family members who fail to appreciate that the Creative Process can involve hours of staring vacantly at a blank screen while scratching your head, sucking your teeth, picking your nose or whatever other unsavoury habits you indulge in. Talking shop with others who understand this vital fact is half the charm of "writers' workshops" — you've guessed it, our subject of the month.

All those I've ever been to have a distinct science-fictional flavour. The most demanding of these is the annual Milford SF Writers' Conference which first started in the 1970s as a spin-off from the American event in Milford, Pennsylvania; the ever-resourceful

Brits held theirs in Milford-on-Sea, Hants. (It's moved since, and to those in the know, "Milford" is now the little-known SF spelling of "Cheltenham".)

At Milford, a gaggle of SF writers fill a hapless hotel for the space of a week. The main criterion for being there is that you must, at some stage, have sold professionally (one sale will do) and you must bring a stack of copies of something for discussion: no one is allowed to shred others' stories without offering up their own sacrificial goat...

The daily routine of Milford strikes me as a good general model for workshops. Each morning, everyone frantically reads and makes notes on that day's contributions. Each afternoon is a long critical session in which several pieces are discussed relentlessly into the

ground... after which the conference staggers as a body, pale and sweating, to the bar.

This system has been specially designed to give everybody present, regardless of how shy they are, his or her say on every manuscript. Usually someone is chosen to get the ball rolling in the first place (by drawing straws, by asking who actually wants first go at this MS, or by the dictatorial decision of whoever's in the chair).

Critical mass

Everyone in turn then has a nominal three minutes in which to make some sort of comment; this might be a hymn of unsullied adoration, a devastating attack, or detailed DIY instructions for dismantling the story and putting it together so it'll fly better and further.

The victim in the hot seat can then reply to all these tormentors at any reasonable length. (It was at this point that one famous SF author reputedly cried, "You bastards, how dare you find fault with Me?" — and stalked out, never to appear at Milford again.) There follows a final free-for-all discussion, a five-minute break, and it's time for the next MS to go under the microscope....

On one or two evenings, there will probably be a red-hot debate on some topic or other which, like erupting magma, tends to overflow the boundaries of the timed afternoon sessions.

On the other evenings... well, I think we'd better draw a veil over the libellous shoptalk, in-jokes and wildly silly literary games. It's always a great week, though always too expensive. The groan-laden morning after the final party is punctuated by eldritch screams as participants slowly begin to realise the full horror of their respective hotel bills.

Home truths

Much cheaper and more frequent are the writers' gatherings confined to one day or weekend at someone's house. The discussion sessions tend to have much the same structure as at Milford; what varies is the reading of the actual manuscripts.

Only if you tend to be very well organized are they circulated in advance by each contributor or by the current meeting's host. This host needs to send out reminders of everyone's address, and to exercise nothing less than complete fascist control over the number of actual contributors — unless the attendance is tiny, your brains will fall out should you try to give more than four or five stories the full treatment in one day.

Slightly less efficient groups, on the other hand, can ask people to

bring many copies of their MSs to be read on the spot. In a one-day session, this always means hasty skimming by latecomers, and only the ablest critics will be able to muster anything more substantial than "quickie" first reactions. There's a disreputable school of thought which says, "Who cares? It's the social side I come for."

Totally disorganized groups, like the first and most enjoyable one I ever belonged to, madly rely on the stories being read aloud to the workshop members and commented on after a period of mature reflection lasting about five minutes.

It was at one of these gatherings that one aggrieved author said, "Langford, I could see you counting the pile of unread pages and openly calculating how much longer you had to suffer...."

There are those who read their stuff so well that criticism of the actual words, however lacklustre, is lost in admiration of Performance Art. Totally unfair, of course.

(Still, several regulars from this series of chaotic meetings later became SF household names. You'll all have heard of L.Ron Hoover, Arthur C. Kellogg and Isaac Amstrad.)

Pass it on

Even more economically, far-flung groups can conduct these critical sessions in slow motion, by post. One popular system has a packet of MSs circulating as a round-robin parcel, each recipient passing it on with (a) critical notes on the contents and (b) a new contribution. When the package comes round again, you remove your by now tatty and coffee-stained MS, and read the huge wad of criticism which has accumulated....

Under the generic name "Orbiter", several groups like this are run in connection with the British SF Association (membership enquiries to Joanne Raine, 33 Thornville Rd, Hartlepool, Cleveland, TS2 8EW). Or you could simply locate a few other aspiring authors yourself.

Of course, if you know other PCW-owning writers, a lot of postage can be saved on the round robin. Several stories and a lot of critical response can be packed into even the 360k of a single, circulating 8256 disc.

You could always use a lightweight (reusable) jiffybag and have the writers add their thoughts in turn to the end of each story document — more economical with disc space than extra files of comment.

Many of you out there are, I know, doing it already. Good luck, and watch out for those "traditional narrative elements"... the delicate Milford euphemism for clichés. ●

TIPOFFS

Revolutionise your PCW!

Want freedom in LocoScript? Denied privileges in BASIC? Think the system is unfair in CP/M? Throw off the shackles of your oppressors and make your PCW work for you instead, in the Tipoffs October revolution! Being liberated this month are LocoScript, BASIC, Mini Office, LocoFile and Masterfile, while the rouble equivalent of £30 and the Lenin Medal (First Class) goes rushin' to E Lovegood of Stockport for his electronic wizardry that runs your PCW through an extra monitor. Or even a telescreen. Do you know any ways to beat the system? Spread your knowledge to the masses! Send your tips in LocoScript, BASIC, or any well-known program to *Tipoffs*, 8000 Plus, 30 Monmouth St, Bath BA1 2XF. Even that's been liberated – it's Freepost.

Font of wisdom

You can get more than one font from LocoFont onto the same page by using 'Direct printing' to produce it: the only limitation is that you can't change font mid-line. Go into direct printing by pressing **D** [ENTER] at the disc manager. Now, whatever you type on screen will be sent to the printer when you press [RETURN] (but not [ENTER]), which can therefore be used to create a new line on screen with-

out printing the previous line).

To change to a new font:

1. Leave direct printing by pressing [EXIT] [ENTER]
2. Press [PTR] and then [f5] 'Printer'.
3. Select 'character set' and [ENTER]. The list of available fonts appears.
4. Move over the desired font. Press [+] to select it then [ENTER] [EXIT] [ENTER] [EXIT]
5. Go back into direct printing by pressing **D** [ENTER].

Ian Chisnall, Bolton, Lancs

By using Direct Printing you can switch fonts in midstream...



...and hence type a single document with lots of different type styles

If you get bored of one style... you can change to another... as many times as you like

Space saver

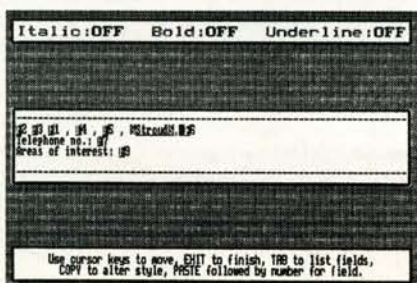
When formatting labels in Mini Office's database it is sometimes necessary to put in punctuation. This can be copied in of course, but it is possible to save a few keystrokes. After pasting in the field number, enter [SPACE] (punctuation mark) [SPACE].

The first space is ignored; only the punctuation mark and second

space are printed.

Dave Bailes, Stroud, Glos

You can put punctuation in a Mini Office label – in a roundabout way



Tick trick

How can I get a simple tick in a LocoScript document? It's in the menus so it must be in there somewhere!

Edward Disney, Falmouth, Cornwall

8000 Plus: In LocoScript 2 it's easy: [ALT] [f7] then **N** (then [ALT] [f1] to reselect normal characters). In LocoScript 1 you

can't get a tick in a document, whatever can show up in a menu. Like the border patterns for the menu boxes, the characters are not part of the available screen set and are not defined for the printer.

Put a tick ✓ or a cross ✕ in the box as appropriate

Ticks are easy in LocoScript 2, but the only place you'll find them in LocoScript 1 is on a menu

Save £££

My Star LC24-10 won't print a £ sign in BASIC. I've tried turning switches 2-2 and 2-3 to give UK language on the printer, but this gives £ instead of £, and no #. Any suggestions?

J Baldwin, Bath, Avon

8000 Plus: It sounds like you're

producing the Epson character set, which for characters of over 128 is the same as characters 128 less, but in italics. So, it's giving character 163, the £ sign, as character 35 in italics. What you really want is the IBM character set 1, which should give you a normal pound sign, and which the printer manual should tell you how to obtain.

Know your place

The BASIC command to place the cursor at row x and column y, i.e. PRINT

CHR\$(27)+"Y"+CHR\$(x+32)+CHR\$(y+32), doesn't always work properly. Sometimes it puts the cursor at the wrong line or position across.

Also, when I attempt to LPRINT graphics, as described in the CP/M manual for the 8512 and 8256 on pages 124 and 136, it malfunctions on codes 9 and 163.

Are there tricks to get round these two problems?

John Little, Emsworth, Hants

8000 Plus: For the cursor placement, this is worth a try. Put a line 10 WIDTH 255,255 at the beginning of your listing. The PCW

counts up spaces travelled across the screen and can be fooled into thinking that it's got to the end of a line and puts a spurious return in, not having taken into account the fact that your cursor positioning has mucked things up. The above command makes the screen infinite width so should weed out these unwanted returns. However, it is perfectly possible that there are bugs we're just stuck with in this command; I seem to remember having problems with this before. As for LPRINTING graphics, 163 works fine for me but 9 appears to tab. I've had problems with this command before too and must say it isn't totally reliable, though the equivalent commands in Protext or Mini Office (using >OC or [ALT]Z to send codes to the printer) seem to work OK.

Memory man

1. Is there any way of resetting the PCW with [SHIFT] [EXTRA] [EXIT] (for example, to run LocoScript after working with a database program) so that you don't lose the files on drive M?
2. Does Flipper's [SHIFT] [EXTRA] [EXIT] – which flips across to the other half of the PCW – leave the memory intact?
3. What is the limit of expansion of the memory when you add devices such as extra chips or SCA's Rampac?

Douglas Jopling, Harrow, Middx

8000 Plus: 1. When you press [SHIFT] [EXTRA] [EXIT], the PCW doesn't actually wipe out what's in the M drive (Flipper

uses this fact). However, there's no easy way I know short of writing your own patches on CP/M in assembler – which is far too clever for me I'm afraid! – that would let you access the memory subsequently. 2. Flipper does leave the memory intact, but splits it into two discrete halves, neither accessible from the other. So you can access files stored on (say) your CP/M half by flipping back to CP/M, but over in LocoScript the files won't show at all – and vice versa. 3. The maximum memory any PCW can have in the form of internal chips is 512K. By adding on memory packs that plug into the back like the SCA Rampac (piggy-backing one on top of the other is possible) you can go up to a theoretical maximum of 2048K.

Password? Pass

Is there a way of getting a password typed on screen so that it doesn't show?

Simon Roser, Ayr, Scotland

8000 Plus: Yes, using the INPUT\$ command. This routine illustrates how, with the password 'Fred':

```
10 PRINT "Type password"
```

```
20 tries%=0
```

```
30 password$=INPUT$(4)
```

```
40 IF password$="Fred" THEN  
GOTO 100
```

```
50 tries%=tries%+1
```

```
60 IF tries%<3 then PRINT
```

```
Wrong password" : GOTO 30
```

```
70 PRINT "Sorry. Program  
aborted."
```

```
80 OUT 248,11
```

```
100 PRINT "Correct" : REM
```

program continues...

This routine gives the user three chances to get it right. The passwords they type are not displayed on screen and they don't press [RETURN] at the end - BASIC just takes whatever four letters they type as the password. (If the password has five letters, change the 4 in line 30 to 5.) If the user gets it wrong three times, line 80 sounds the burglar alarm - try it. (To turn it off, just type OUT 248,12 [RETURN]).

There's not much point having a password unless you protect the listing to stop people listing it and looking for a line like 40 that tells them what it is! To protect your listing, save it by typing SAVE "PROGRAM.BAS",P [RETURN].

PC to PCW

Is it possible to run PCW programs on a PC2086 and if so, how?

Simon Roser, Ayr, Scotland

8000 Plus: Generally speaking, no: you couldn't get your PCW version of Protext or LocoScript or Mini Office, say, to run on a PC; though of course PC versions of these programs do exist.

However, you can probably get your BASIC programs to run on a PC. First, save the BASIC listing on PCW disc as ASCII (by typing something like SAVE "PROGRAM.BAS",A). Then transfer this text file from the PCW to the PC as with normal text files (the process is described in detail in 8000 Plus issue 30, March 88, p70) or just retype it directly onto the PC. Save it to disc on the PC and run it as normal under BASIC on the PC. There are several provisos.

First, all your screen positioning will of course be out, as the PC has a smaller screen size. Also, many commands in Mallard BASIC (the PCW's BASIC) may not exist or may work differently in the BASIC you use on the PC; check the PC BASIC manual. Finally anything clever that accesses the memory or the ports on the PCW (i.e. POKEs, PEEKs, OUTs) will not work on the PC.

Base motives

How can Mini Office (original version) be persuaded to accept files created in dBase II?

Trevor Dawson, Beckenham, Kent

8000 Plus: I don't think it can.

It drives me...

The disc drive motor on the PCW continues to run for several seconds after operations using the drive appear to have been completed. Is there any risk of damaging either the discs or the disc-drive if, to avoid this irritating delay, you remove or insert discs into the drive before the motor has stopped running?

John Ramsay, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs.

8000 Plus: Well, over the years I've pulled several discs out of the drive while still being read, never mind in this period after the laser head has finished, and I've never lost any data that way, nor do my drives appear to be working any less effectively. But I think this is a case of do as I say, not do as I do: try and wait for the light to go out.

In a hole

I would like to be able to log all my golf scores, round by round, hole by hole, against the par for each hole and the course. I then want to be able to analyse my scores, graphically, if possible.

Derek Smith, Camberley, Surrey
8000 Plus: What you want is a spreadsheet such as the one on Mini Office (£20 or so, available by mail order from many advertisers in 8000 Plus). It will take a bit of learning, but basically this will let you do exactly what you require. (This month's Good Software Guide explains briefly what a spreadsheet is). As a bonus, Mini Office also includes a graphics utility that can convert your scores into graphs.

Half justified

In LocoScript, how can I justify text which is only half a page wide?

Dr Alan Salmon, Warrington, Lancs

8000 Plus: You can set up whether or not text is to be justified when you define the margins - i.e. when you define a layout. To define a layout proceed as follows.

LocoScript 1 Press [f2], select 'Brand new layout' and press [ENTER]. You now see the layout editing screen. Move the cursor rightwards over 'Justify' and press [+]. A tick appears by it. Now move the cursor down and set your margins on the ruler line. Move to the position where the left margin is to go and press [f1]; then move to the right margin and press [f2]. Press [EXIT] and you're back in the document with the new margins and justified text.

LocoScript 2 Press [f2], select

LocoScript's justification works with any margins. And you can copy those layout commands with COPY to reselect a previously used layout setup.

COPY and keep text:

type block 0..9

or phrase A..Z

or CAN to return to area select

(Layout)
Lord Loopy's comments about
the Wetwang Six were totally
unjustifiable.
(Layout)
To claim that nobody would worry about
them today if they had been hanged
fifteen years ago is also unjustifiable.
(Layout)
After all, nobody would worry
about Lord Loopy if he'd been
hanged fifteen years ago.

On your side

I want to be able to print out very wide charts in LocoScript on my 8256. Unfortunately the printer isn't wide enough to take A4 sideways. What can I do?

Brian Smither, Wellington, New Zealand

8000 Plus: You have three options:

1. Replace your 8256 with a 9512, whose daisywheel printer can take A4 sideways. You can use all the documents you have on your 8256 discs.

2. Buy Mini Office (available by mail order from many advertisers in 8000 Plus for £20 or so) and prepare your charts in the spreadsheet module, which has a sideways printing option. This is fine

arts and tables of information but really no good for wide text documents. You also get for your money a word processor, database, comms package, and graphics module which can make pie charts and graphs from your data. Unfortunately you won't be able to use data you've prepared in LocoScript in Mini Office.

3. Buy Rotate from Proteus Computing (071 748 2302). This can take simple text files (which means LocoScript files must be made into ASCII first - the manual tells you how) and print them sideways. It can't handle subscripts, underlining, italic or any effects like that, just plain text. It's easy to use, works by menus and gives you four fonts to choose from, though the print quality is not nearly as good as NLQ.

Got it taped

Can you reprint the tip that appeared many moons ago which tells you the right layout to make card inserts for music cassettes.

Dr E Ray, London NW6

8000 Plus: Here is a LocoScript document to print cassette inlay cards, complete with titles and a full list of contents. It also takes care of dotted 'Cut Here' lines.

Set up a special group for your tape inlays, called TAPEBOX or something. Set up a TEMPLATE.STD in that group, and enter the following information:

Pitch: 17

Left Margin: 0

Tab: 5, 35, 39

Right margin: 69

To do this: **LocoScript 1:** In TEMPLATE.STD press [F7] for 'Edit header', [ENTER], [F7] again and then [F1] 'Layout'. Set the pitch by typing it in then cursor down into the 'ruler line' and position the cursor at 0 for the left margin; press [F1]. Position the cursor at 5, press [F3] to set a tab, move it to 35, press [F3] again, then to 39 and

[F3] again. Finally move to 69 and press [F2]. [EXIT] and [EXIT] back to main document editing screen.

LocoScript 2: In TEMPLATE.STD press [F1] and then [ENTER] to select 'Document setup' and press [F2] for 'Change layout'. With [F4] 'Size' set size to 17 pitch and with [F8] 'Options' set the 'Scale pitch size' to 17 with the [+] key. Move the cursors to the relevant points in the ruler line and set tabs by pressing [+] and margins from [F1]. [EXIT] and [EXIT] back to the main document editing screen.

On the main editing screen:
Line 1: 69 hyphens (one full line)
Line 5: 69 hyphens
Line 6:
Line 7: [+]P17D[ENTER][+][B][+][I][+][C]
Line 8: [-]P[-]B[-]I, 69 hyphens
Line 23: 69 hyphens

In LocoScript 2, replace C above with CE and on a PCW 9512, replace P17D with P17 and omit the [+]I and [-]I commands.

All the other lines are normal [RETURN]s. When entering the names of the artists (on line 6 and 7) and the tracks (on lines 9 and

below) use [F1] ([F8] in Loco 2) to show all the codes - bold and italic set commands and so on - to make sure everything goes where it should, and use [EOL] to move from line to line instead of [RETURN].

All the other lines are normal [RETURN]s. When entering the data, use the [F1] menu to show just the 'effectors' on the screen,

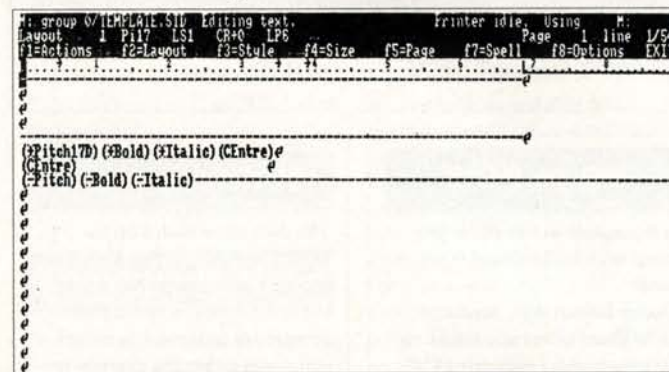
This document produces cassette-box size inlays...

...which will fit nicely into your cases. LocoMail and LocoFile users can fill a document like this with data from their list of tapes and so produce cassette inlays to order

and use [EOL] instead of [RETURN] to move from one line to the next.

Users of LocoMail or LocoFile may find ways of using this as a document to be filled or merged with data files they keep with details of their cassette collection. You can brighten your labels up by using coloured paper and ribbons.

SHOSTAKOVICH: Symphony No. 5	
SIBELIUS: Symphony No. 5	
SHOSTAKOVICH Symphony No. 5 in Gb Op. 47	SIBELIUS Symphony No. 5 in E flat Op. 82
1. Moderato (10:50)	1. Molto moderato: Allegro
2. Allegretto (5:20)	2. Moderato: Presto (12:09)
3. Largo (15:31)	2. Andante mosso, quasi
4. Allegro non troppo (11:05)	allegretto (9:40)
	3. Allegro molto (9:22)
Budapest Symphony Orchestra conducted by Janos Ferenz Recorded live at the Jara Nagy Centre, Budapest, Nov 9 1989	City of Espoo Orchestra conducted by Jukka Tolonen Recorded live at Helsinki Festival, June 6 1990



Spread it about

SuperCalc spreadsheets can be inserted into LocoScript and tidied up as follows.

1. Save the relevant section of the spreadsheet as a separate file.
2. Using SuperCalc's SDI facility, convert this to a comma separated file (ending in .CSV).
3. Run up LocoScript and create a new document, or edit an existing one. It must be on the disc with the .CSV file on it.
4. Move to the end and press [F7]

([F1] in LocoScript 2) and 'Insert text'. Move the cursor in the disc manager over the .CSV file and [ENTER].

5. Move to the start of the section inserted. Press [EXCH] and give " as the text to find, and nothing as the text to replace it with. Select automatic exchange.
6. Repeat step 5 substituting commas for a [TAB].
7. Press [F2] and change the layout. Set tabs appropriately across the page so that the spreadsheet lays out neatly.

M MacLellan, Potton, Beds

Layout

From time to time with LocoScript 2 it's necessary to change the margins, line spacing and so on of a document to provide a more suitable layout for your needs.

If you want to use headers and footers as well, you have to be careful to make sure to alter the relevant layout (Layout 0) too, or else centred headers etc. may not come out in the right place.

Rather than going into Document setup and manually changing all the parameters of the layout, you'll be pleased to hear that there is a quick way of copying the layout of the main body of the text into the headers and footers.

Set the margins, line pitch etc. of the document and go into document setup [F1]. This takes you to the headers/footers layout.

Press [F2] and select the 'change stock layout' option; hit [ENTER] to change Layout 0. Then press [F5], to copy a new layout, and cursor to Layout 1. (By default, the main document is called Layout 1, the header/footer layout Layout 0). Press [ENTER]. Now, [EXIT] [EXIT] [ENTER] will take you back to the header/footer layout, which you will see now has the same margins etc. as the main document. Another [EXIT] [ENTER] will take you back to the document itself.

Rev. M Komor, Llantwit Major, S Glamorgan

What boots it

Please tell me how to make a BASIC program self starting from CP/M.

Matthew Christopherson, Mapperley, Nottingham

8000 Plus: If you follow these steps, you can create a self-starting disc. That is, you just switch on your PCW, insert the disc, and the program starts up and runs by itself. Let's say it's called PROGRAM.BAS.

1. Reset your PCW by pressing [SHIFT] [EXTRA] [EXIT]. Insert your CP/M copy disc in the drive. When the A> appears, type PIP [RETURN].

2. At the asterisk, type M:=A:SUBMIT.COM [RETURN].

3. When the asterisk reappears type M:=A:BASIC.COM [RETURN].

4. When the asterisk reappears type M:=A:*.EMS [RETURN].

5. Remove the CP/M disc. Insert a disc with PROGRAM.BAS on it and lots of free space (at least 80K).

6. Type A:=M:*. * [RETURN].

7. When the asterisk reappears type A:PRO-

FILE.SUB=CON: [RETURN].

8. Type BASIC PROGRAM [RETURN]. (If you make a mistake, backspace with [CAN] and overwrite from the position of the error. If you want to put more than one line in the file, end each with [ALT] J as well as [RETURN].)

9. Press [ALT] Z. The disc should spin and whirr.

10. Press [STOP].

11. Now type DIR [RETURN] to check that the following five files are on the disc:

J(something)CPM3.EMS; PROFILE.SUB; SUBMIT.COM; BASIC.COM; PROGRAM.BAS.

Now remove the disc. Reset the PCW with [SHIFT] [EXTRA] [EXIT], insert the disc again, and watch the magic...

CP/M Plus Amstrad Consumer Electronics plc
v 2.3, 61K TPA, 1 disc drive, 112K drive M:

A>pip
CP/M 3 PIP VERSION 3.0

M:=A:submit.com
M:=A:basic.com
M:=A:j.p.ems
M:=M:*

COPYING -
SUBMIT.COM
BASIC.COM
J14CPM3.EMS

M:=profile.sub=con:
basic program

A>dir
A: J14CPM3 EMS : PROFILE SUB : SUBMIT COM :
A: BASIC COM : PROGRAM BAS

Making a magic BASIC disc: just switch on and insert it, and it'll crank up PROGRAM.BAS for you

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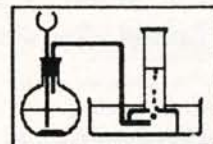
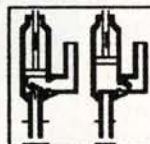


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Key fact

After using SuperCalc, the keys in CP/M don't work as expected. To restore them, 9512 owners should not look for the file LOCOCHAR.KEY, as suggested in August's Tipoffs. Instead they should copy the file CPMKEYS.COM from the CP/M disc to the SuperCalc start disc and add the line CPMKEYS to the end of the PROFILE.SUB file.
John MacLeod, North Newbald, Yorkshire

Makes CEN's

I want my BASIC program to run with my second printer from the centronics port. How can I get my BASIC startup disc to do this automatically for me?
P Robins, Wembley, Middlesex
8000 Plus: Include DEVICE.COM (on your CP/M disc) on the startup disc, and somewhere in your PROFILE.SUB file include the line **DEVICE LST:=CEN [RETURN]**. How to self-start BASIC is elsewhere in Tipoffs.

A to B of A and B

Why can't I start up LocoScript from the B drive? And why won't PIP copy system files from A to B? Please explain.
Andrew Gibbons, London SW1
8000 Plus: Your PCW always looks for the startup disc in the A

drive because that's the way it has been designed to work! The startup instructions are 'hard wired' into the printer chip and can't really be changed.

PIP can copy system files - just put [R] after the command. For example **PIP B:=A:*.*/[R]** copies all normal and system files from A to B.

ASCII question

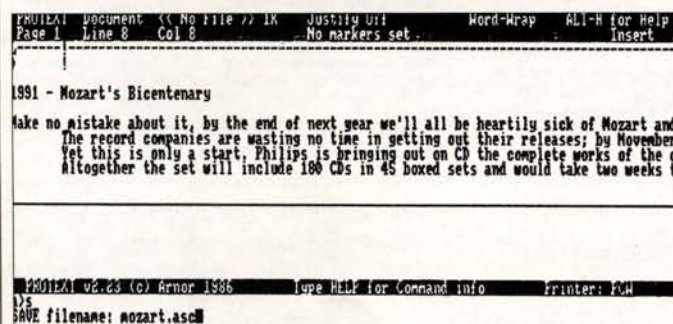
Does Protext have an equivalent of LocoScript's 'Make ASCII file' command?

F Hall, Maryport, Cumbria
8000 Plus: No. Let's say you want to put the contents of a Protext file into a LocoScript file, or you're writing a book that the publishers would like submitted on disc as well as hard copy. In either case you want to save your text files as ASCII files. But whatever the manual tells you, there is no easy way to get sensible ASCII files in Protext. (If you use the PRINTF command as it suggests, you end up with too many [RETURN]s put in the file.) This is what you must do. First make sure there are no printer codes or ruler lines in the document. (Use [EXCH] if necessary: replacing !b with nothing strips out all the bold commands, !i the italic commands and so on. [FIND] followed by !>L finds the next ruler line.) Funny characters

- any letter with an accent, or any symbol that isn't shown on the keyboard - must be removed or replaced with their nearest equivalent that is on the keyboard.

Next put a ruler line at the top that is extremely wide - 1500 characters or so. To do this, move the cursor to the left hand edge and type >L then [ALT]g then c1500 [RETURN]. Then type r [RETURN]. Now go into command mode by pressing [STOP] and type ft [RETURN].

Your document is turned into a series of very long single-line paragraphs. To insert this into a LocoScript document, save it and run up LocoScript. Create a new file on the disc with the Protext file on it. Inside the new LocoScript file, press [f1] ([f7] in LocoScript 1) and select 'Insert text' [ENTER]. Back in the disc manager, move the cursor over the Protext file and press [ENTER] [ENTER]. If there were any very long paragraphs you might have to edit out the odd spurious Greek letter.



A Protext file that is effectively in ASCII form. Note the wide ruler line, single-line paragraphs and lack of printer control codes or accents

Two monitors

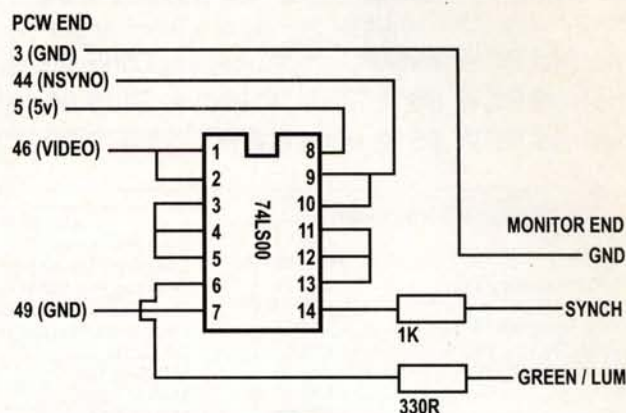
It is possible to connect another monitor to your PCW (contrary to the impression given by August's Tipoff on p 68). A small interface circuit needs to be built to boost the signal from the PCW's expansion connector to drive a second monitor. The circuit shown here works well with most RGB monitors, or TVs with an RGB (or SCART) input. Some TVs may chop off the edge

because of the wide 90 column PCW screen.

If you're not confident about tackling this yourself, don't! Get some help.

E Loverseed, Bramhall, Stockport

8000 Plus: Mr Loverseed has kindly offered to make one of these devices for anyone who needs one, but isn't keen to do it themselves, for a mere £20. Write to him care of 8000 Plus at the Tipoffs address.



Not for dabblers! A circuit diagram that will let you run two monitors simultaneously with your PCW

A5 Paper

Please tell me in simple steps how to set LocoScript to use A5 paper.

J McCreadie, Edinburgh.

8000 Plus: To set a document to be printed out on A5 paper is easier in LocoScript 2 than in 1. For Loco 2, edit the document. Press [f1] and then [ENTER] for 'document setup'. Press [f5] 'Page' and [ENTER] to select the paper type. From the paper type menu select 'A5' with the cursors and select this type with the [+] key plus [ENTER]. [EXIT] and [ENTER] back to the main document; this is now set up to print on A5 paper. If, when you come to print the document, you get a 'document and printer do not match', select the option 'change to paper intended

for document'. For LocoScript 1 you have to set things manually. In the document to be printed on A5 paper, press [f7] for 'Edit header', [ENTER], [f7] again and then [f1] 'Layout'. Set the pitch to 12 or PS by typing it in then cursor down into the 'ruler line' and position the cursor at 22 for the left margin; press [f1]. Finally move to 77 and press [f2]. After pressing [EXIT] on setting the margins, select [f7] 'page size' from the next menu. Set the page length to 50, header zone to 7 and position 6 (page body automatically goes to 37) and footer zone to 6 at position 46. Finally, when you come to print out, go into printer control state by pressing [PTR] and select [f1] 'options'. Cursor to 'form length' and set it to 50. [ENTER] and print out.

Footnote

Further to August's tip on footnotes, WordStar users who would like a footnote facility can get it free from a program in the public domain called FTNOTE14.COM. It is available from PCW Software, 11 Older Way, Angmering, Sussex BN16 4HQ.

B Rowley, Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire

NLQ&A

If you happen to be using an FX80 dot matrix printer or something similar and find you can only get draft quality in 10 or 12 pitch when using the FX80_NLQ printer file, the only remedy would appear to be to switch to proportional spacing with [+PS].

John Lawford, Eastleigh, Hants



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Spreadsheets

If a database replaces an address book, then a spreadsheet replaces the back of an old envelope. It is really an electronic piece of paper which allows you to jot down numbers, juggle them around and analyse the cost benefits of a situation. Vital for businesses, spreadsheets can be useful to home users too: if you want a bank loan you will find that showing your bank manager a spreadsheet printout of your living expenses answers a lot of questions!

A typical spreadsheet has a grid of rows and columns. This grid forms a screenful of cells identified by their column and row numbers, e.g. A3, K36 etc. Each cell can contain a simple number, some text to make the page easier to read, or a formula telling the spreadsheet to work out a number using values from elsewhere. The power of spreadsheets is in this last category, formulae. You can make a cell's value depend on the value of cells above it, or to the left of it, and this value is then automatically updated if changes are made to the other cells.

So how do you choose between the various spreadsheets? One difference is sheet size, i.e. the number of cells you are allowed to work with. You'll need a few hundred for home use, and 1000 or more for business use. Another area is the range of formulae that you can use – all spreadsheets allow simple column and row totalling, but with some you can get complex statistical analyses too. As with all software, think very carefully what you will need before choosing.

These pages provide a guide to the best software around for the Amstrad PCW. Published in three monthly parts, this time it's the turn of Spreadsheets, Games and Graphics to face the ultimate test. We've set out to test every piece of software we could lay our hands on, and to give you enough information to decide which program is the one you might be looking for.

The selection isn't comprehensive, but the software listed here represents what we think is the best of that currently available. As well as a brief summary of what they do, there are the main Plus and Minus points for each program - Pluses have a ▲ by them, Minuses a ▼.

Most of the packages mentioned throughout this guide should run on all three models of the PCW - unless, of course, we have stated otherwise.

Mini Office Professional Plus

£49.95 • Database Software • 0625 878888

Mini Office is a suite of five integrated programs – database, word processor, graphics module, comms package, and a very good spreadsheet. Broadly similar to SuperCalc in operation with usual features of auto or manual recalculation, replicating of rows/columns, powerful range of arithmetic functions etc. Printout is a strong point - rows/columns can be put into italic/bold etc, and prints draft, NLQ or even sideways! Can't sort and can't just save data or structure of a spreadsheet, but maximum size of spreadsheet is claimed to be 320k. You can use the data from a spreadsheet in the graphics module directly. The manual is, however, pretty useless.

PLUSES • MINUSES

- ▲ Good, full-featured easy to use spreadsheet
- ▲ Prints in draft, NLQ or even sideways
- ▲ Maximum size of spreadsheet 320k
- ▲ Can transfer data directly to graphics module
- ▲ Can drive 24-pin printouts
- ▼ 'Save' options not as versatile as SuperCalc

Cracker turbo

£49.00 • Paperback Software • 0245 265017

A spreadsheet designed with advanced calculating power firmly in mind, including statistical functions. The screen layout is totally defined by the user, and cell value calculations can almost be full programs, e.g. DO ... WHILE. It might prove too complex if all you want is simple spreadsheet operations. The screen messages are very helpful though. Turbo is claimed to be faster than Cracker 2 though sometimes isn't noticeably so.

PLUSES • MINUSES

- ▲ Can cope with very complex formulae
- ▲ Flexible screen format defined by the user
- ▲ On-screen prompts are very clear
- ▲ Graphs/charts can be automatically produced
- ▼ Documentation is large, but obscure and confusing
- ▼ You've got to do a lot of work just to get started
- ▼ Very complex for quick, simple applications
- ▼ Needs some programming skills to get the most out of it
- ▼ Free workspace is on the small side (17k) although memory is used efficiently

SuperCalc 2

£69.95 • Amsoft/Spicim • 091 510 8787

The best selling spreadsheet, officially endorsed by Amstrad. SuperCalc 2 is broadly similar to ScratchPad Plus, but it has a smaller workspace and is less flexible about the allowed spreadsheet dimensions.

You can store sequences of commands for repetitive calculations. Price includes VAT and p&p.

PLUSES • MINUSES

- ▲ Excellent manual – sections for beginners and experts.
- ▲ Stores commands to run from files
- ▲ "Data Interchanger" allows you to transfer spreadsheet data to other applications
- ▲ Comprehensive range of calculation functions available
- ▲ Screen can be split into 2 windows
- ▼ Spreadsheet is limited by memory size
- ▼ No graphical output facilities

First Calc

£29.95 • Minerva Systems • 0392 437756

Touted as a quick and simple to use program for the beginner, this is nevertheless quite a powerful spreadsheet, with a large capacity, ability to replicate formulae, export etc. Really it's not vastly more user-friendly than the rest but a good value package all the same.

PLUSES • MINUSES

- ▲ A lot of program for the money
- ▲ Good tutorials with demo files
- ▲ Simple to use but reasonably sophisticated
- ▼ Not much easier to use than more powerful packages
- ▼ Program is limited by the memory capacity of the PCW (300 - 400 filled cells)

Graphics

You can use a graphics package to create and store diagrams and drawings on disc, to be amended, adjusted or printed out at will.

There are three main types of graphics package: art, technical drawing and graph plotting programs. In art packages the emphasis is on designs and pictures, with freehand drawing facilities, a selection of pretty text fonts and a variety of patterns to fill areas with. These are made much more effective and easier to use if you have a mouse.

Technical drawing packages concentrate on shapes, such as squares and polygons, lines and labels. Finally graph

plotters will take your data and turn them into bar charts, pie charts and so on. 9512 owners will have to buy a dot matrix printer to do all this, of course.

Master Paint

£19.95 • Database Software • 0625 878888

A WIMP environment graphics package (windows, icons, menus, and pointer) which will run with Kempston, AMX or Electric Studio mice. Usual facilities for drawing curved or straight lines, polygons, boxes, circles and ellipses, and a host of 'fill' patterns. 'Undo' function and eraser facility, plus the ability to zoom in on a part of the picture.

PLUSES • MINUSES

- ▲ WIMP environment makes it easy to use
- ▲ Zoom function lets you fine-tune your pictures
- ▲ Good range of effects
- ▲ Undo and erase facilities
- ▼ Text fonts are boring
- ▼ Can't move large blocks with the copy function

MasterScan

£69.95 • Database Software • 0625 878888

A device which clips on to your printer head and scans pictures, sending the digitised result to disc. You can then use the pictures in desktop publications or in other graphics packages, such as Master Paint. Very useful for newsletter production but the claims for Master Scan as a low-cost fax machine are grandiose - the quality of scanned text is poor if the text is anything less than headline size.

PLUSES • MINUSES

- ▲ Simple method of getting good digitised graphics
- ▲ Suitable for all desktop publishing programs
- ▲ Contrast control useful
- ▼ Quality of scanned text is bad - no good for faxes
- ▼ Problems with illustrations containing lots of grey

Powerful

Lightning BASIC

£24.95 • CP Software • 0993 823463

A very clever add-on to normal Basic which works on three levels. The first contains all the everyday commands, whilst the second and third levels are used for designing icons, characters and sprites. There is something in it for everyone, whether an experienced Basic programmer or a beginner.

PLUSES • MINUSES

- ▲ Simple and easy to use
- ▲ Makes simple Basic programs look really professional
- ▲ Good fun to use
- ▼ Documentation can be unclear
- ▼ Printed output is coarse draft quality
- ▼ Can only cope with simple graphics

Powerful

Complement Fonts & Borders

£12.50 • Dragonfly Designs • N/A

Although it can be used with all the main DTP packages, this latest complement disc was designed to work alongside Stop Press. The 11 fonts supplied on the disc show consistent good design and artistic flair and are easily loaded.

PLUSES • MINUSES

- ▲ The fonts provide a very professional finish.
- ▲ It is possible to rotate and reverse elements.
- ▲ Very user-friendly.
- ▼ Setting up borders tends to be difficult and time-consuming.
- ▼ Printed output could be better (but it is still above average).

Signwriter

£29.95 • Wight Scientific • 081 858 2699

Offers the widest range of features of any of the poster printing programs. Signwriter provides a range of 20 fonts, some of them very imaginative. Ideal for posters.

PLUSES • MINUSES

- ▲ You can redesign fonts and design your own symbols.
- ▲ A wide range of interesting fonts is available
- ▼ Not very user-friendly.
- ▼ Font design is slow.

Stop Press

£49.95 • AMS • 0625 878888

Though touted as a DTP program, Stop Press is an excellent graphics package. Can present data in the form of graphs, pie charts etc., and has the usual range of facilities to draw and fill triangles, boxes and so on plus a very good 'zoom' option which lets you examine the effect of changes in great detail.

PLUSES • MINUSES

- ▲ Good graph drawing facilities
- ▲ Can design your own area fill patterns
- ▲ Good range of clip art, which you can modify if you wish
- ▲ Can superimpose one image on another
- ▲ Works with AMX and Kempston mice
- ▲ Is also a good DTP package
- ▼ Undoing wrongly placed text is difficult

AYE PLUS

£24.95 • CP Software • 0993 823463

The full title is 'All you ever wanted to know about graphics, the universe and everything on PCW 8256/8512 ... but were afraid to ask PLUS'. Phew. A wide range of little programs to do graphic things on the PCW like smooth scrolling, defining windows, moving sprites around. The programs are written in assembler, with the source code provided if you want to see how to program them for yourself and adapt the routines.

PLUSES • MINUSES

- ▲ Wide range of useful functions
- ▲ Can be used from BASIC, machine code, or other language
- ▲ The assembler source code is supplied
- ▲ Inexpensive
- ▲ Good manual
- ▲ CP don't mind you using their routines in programs you sell
- ▼ A bit long-winded to use from BASIC
- ▼ No easy way of loading just the routines you want

Page Magic, Disc Image Kit, Disc Poster Kit

£13.50 each • HD Design • 04867 81394

Clip art collection with a difference. This suite of three ready-made design aids offers a wide range of additions to your text. Page Magic contains a series of sporting images and digitised male and female shots, together with a handy selection of frames and borders. Image Kit has a range of images, from Spitfires to Buddha, whilst Poster Kit offers an excellent collection of print styles, which reproduce with astounding clarity.

PLUSES

- ▲ Poster Kit contains ready made words such as 'Fete' and 'Sale'
- ▲ Excellent visual clarity

VIDI PCW

£79.99 • Rombo Productions • 0506 414631

A very similar package to the Electric Studio digitiser; not much to choose between the two. Rombo's works with the Fleet Street Editor, Electric Studio's with Newsdesk International.

PLUSES • MINUSES

- ▲ Text can be inserted from within the program
- ▲ 16 levels of shading

- ▲ Can print images to screen in defined order and time apart.
- ▼ Unhelpful manual

MD Cleartext

£13.50 • Exemplar Design • n/a

Designed for use in conjunction with MicroDesign, MD Cleartext allows you to create your own type styles to live up your work. There is a range of non-English fonts on offer as well, including the accents in the French, German and Spanish languages. An excellent add-on to an excellent DTP program.

PLUSES

- ▲ Developed in conjunction with Creative Technology themselves, resulting in a comprehensive appreciation of ▲
- ▲ MicroDesign's workings.
- ▲ No jagged edges or loss of definition when large characters are printed out
- ▲ Produced from a quality and highly reputed source



The choice of games for the PCW is far from extensive in comparison with what is on offer for other machines. However, the range is widening, and there is an increase in graphics-based games, replacing the text-only adventures which currently dominate the market for the PCW. Text-based games rely heavily on the use of parsers, which aid adventure navigation by word analysis. The ability of a parser, is, not surprisingly, responsible for the success or failure of a game. What follows is a selection of some of the best games currently available for the PCW, together with a marks out of five evaluation.

Academy (Tau Ceti II)

£14.95 • CRL • 081 533 2918 • 8000s only

The sequel to Tau Ceti. To qualify as an advanced skimmer pilot, you must complete successfully 20 missions. Blast enemy craft with your personally designed skimmer.

GRAPHICS	4/5	ADDICTIVENESS	5/5
LASTING APPEAL	4/5	VALUE VERDICT	5/5

Avon

£14.95 • Topologika • 0733 244682 • All PCWs

Based on the world and work of Shakespeare, this text-only adventure puts many a puzzler to even the most well-versed student of the bard. A handy help mode will get you out of the tighter corners. Compulsive gameplay!

ADDICTIVENESS	4/5	ATMOSPHERE	4/5
CHALLENGE	4/5	VALUE VERDICT	4/5

Backgammon

£12.95 • CP Software • 0993 823463 • All PCWs

A fairly good implementation of the gambling board-game. Playing speed is easily alterable and is totally unrelated to the games level of skill control.

RANGE OF FEATURES	4/5	STRENGTH OF PLAY	3/5
GRAPHICS	4/5	DOCUMENTATION	3/5

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Blackstar**£14.95 • CRL • 081 533 2918 • 8000s only**

A traditional text adventure with large playing area. You explore Castle Blackstar in search of a power orb.

ATMOSPHERE	4/5	INTERACTION	2/5
CHALLENGE	4/5	VALUE VERDICT	4/5

Bounder**£13.95 • Gremlin • 0742 753423 • 8000s only**

A graphics bouncing-ball game. You have to direct the ball over a treacherous network of squares & hexagons. Persevere – or use the cheat mode!

GRAPHICS	4/5	ADDICTIVENESS	3/5
LASTING APPEAL	3/5	VALUE VERDICT	4/5

Brian Clough's Fortunes**£19.99 • CDS • 0302 321134 • All PCWs**

A cross between Monopoly and Football Manager, combining board and PCW. Go for league and cup success – but keep the bank manager happy too!

GRAPHICS	2/5	ADDICTIVENESS	4/5
LASTING APPEAL	4/5	VALUE VERDICT	4/5

**Bridge Player
Galactica 2150****£19.95 • CP Software • 0993 823463 • All PCWs**

The upgraded Bridge Player 2000. Excellent Tutor mode with hands written by Nichola Gardener of the London Bridge School. Retains strong play.

GRAPHICS	3/5	STRENGTH OF PLAY	4/5
LASTING APPEAL	4/5	VALUE VERDICT	3/5

Classic Games**£19.95 • CP Software • 0993 823463 • All PCWs**

A compilation of classic 'thinking' games on one disc: Clock Chess, Bridge Player, Backgammon and Draughts. Excellent value for money.

Clock Chess 89**£19.95 • CP Software • 0993 823463 • All PCWs**

One of the better PCW chess programs. You can alter the level of play by specifying a time limit. Capable of very strong play and the 3D graphics are excellent.

GRAPHICS	4/5	STRENGTH OF PLAY	5/5
RANGE OF FEATURES	5/5	VALUE VERDICT	5/5

Colossus Chess 4.0**£19.99 • CDS Software • 0302 321134 • All PCWs**

A very strong chess game which manages to use time which you spend thinking to plan its strategy. Bags of features, including blindfold games.

GRAPHICS	3/5	STRENGTH OF PLAY	3/5
LASTING APPEAL	4/5	VALUE VERDICT	3/5

Corruption**£24.95 • Rainbird • 0666 504 326 • All PCWs**

Takes you into the heady world of stocks and shares where making money is what it's all about. There's something rotten in the state of Scott Electronics and it's up to you to find out what.

ATMOSPHERE	4/5	INTERACTION	5/5
CHALLENGE	4/5	VALUE VERDICT	5/5

Cyrus II Chess**£15.95 • Amsoft • 0279 454555 • All PCWs**

Chess game with a stunningly detailed 3-D display. The play is quite strong, with several handy features like allowing you to take back a move.

GRAPHICS	5/5	STRENGTH OF PLAY	3/5
LASTING APPEAL	4/5	VALUE VERDICT	4/5

Double t Patience**£14.95 • Thurston Techniques • 0395 277496 • All PCWs**

Six well-known card games (from Poker Patience to Pairs) to be played either alone or against the computer.

GRAPHICS	2/5	ADDICTIVENESS	5/5
LASTING APPEAL	4/5	VALUE VERDICT	3/5

Fish**£24.99 • Rainbird • 0666 504 326 • All PCWs**

The underwater world of Hydropolis is under threat from a gang of interdimensional anarchists. They've stolen a focus wheel and dismantled it; your job is to get it back. Excellent graphics.

ATMOSPHERE	5/5	INTERACTION	4/5
CHALLENGE	4/5	VALUE VERDICT	5/5

Forestland**£14.95 • Classic Quests/Audiogenic • 081 861 1166**

You're in a forest and you're not sure how you got there, whether you are asleep or awake, and how the devil to get out. You need your wits about you in this game to puzzle your way out of the wicked wood.

CHALLENGE	3/5	ADDICTIVENESS	4/5
ATMOSPHERE	3/5	VALUE VERDICT	10/15

Gnome Ranger**£14.95 • Level 9 • 0344 487597 • All PCWs**

You follow the adventures of Ingrid Bottomlow, the intrepid gnome, through a fairy tale landscape full of compelling puzzles. Humorous and rather quaint.

ATMOSPHERE	3/5	INTERACTION	3/5
CHALLENGE	3/5	VALUE VERDICT	4/5

Goblin Towers**£14.95 • Classic Quests/Audiogenic • 081 861 1166**

A game for beginners to adventuring, Goblin Towers sees you as a brave warrior, seeking to retrieve treasure from a goblin-ridden castle.

ATMOSPHERE	3/5	ADDICTIVENESS	3/5
CHALLENGE	3/5	VALUE VERDICT	9/15

Green**£12.00 • Classic Software • All PCWs**

Race against the Global Warming in this new eco-drama game set in forestland threatened by over zealous lumberjacks. Preserve your morality points, perfect your strategy, and you might save the trees from destruction.

ATMOSPHERE	4/5	CHALLENGE	3/5
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GAMEPLAY	4/5	VALUE VERDICT	4/5
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Guild of Thieves**£24.95 • Rainbird • 0666 504 326 • 8000s only**

To join the select Guild of Thieves in Kerovnia, you first have to show your worth by fleeing an island of all its treasures. An excellent adventure!

ATMOSPHERE	5/5	INTERACTION	4/5
CHALLENGE	4/5	VALUE VERDICT	5/5

Head Coach**£15.95 • DGA/Coda • 061 330 0184 • All PCWs**

You coach an American Football team, picking players and deciding tactics against real NFL teams and players. Incredibly detailed simulation – a must for NFL fans!

ATMOSPHERE	4/5	INTERACTION	5/5
CHALLENGE	4/5	VALUE VERDICT	4/5

Head Over Heels**£14.95 • Ocean • 061 832 6633 • 8000s only**

A superlative, compulsive 3D arcade adventure where you control either Head or Heels. Escape from Castle Blacktooth and free the Empire's enslaved planets.

GRAPHICS	5/5	ADDICTIVENESS	5/5
LASTING APPEAL	5/5	VALUE VERDICT	5/5

**Home Entertainment
Centre****£19.99 • CDS • 0302 321134 • All PCWs**

Five-in-one games compilation, featuring darts, backgammon, dominoes, cards and a wordsearch game. Excellent graphics, original ideas and presentation – darts has never yet been available as a game for the PCW.

EASE OF USE	5/5	ADDICTIVENESS	4/5
FEATURES	5/5	VALUE VERDICT	4/5

Ingrid's Back**£19.95 • Level 9 • 0344 487597 • All PCWs**

Sequel to Gnome Ranger in which Ingrid returns to Little Moaning to find it under threat from Jasper Quickbuck who wants to replace it with a yuppie estate. Adventure in 3 parts.

ATMOSPHERE	4/5	INTERACTION	4/5
CHALLENGE	5/5	VALUE VERDICT	4/5

Jinxster**£24.95 • Rainbird • 0666 504326 • All PCWs**

This one's all about saving the civilisation of a place called Aquitania from the wicked Green Witches. All you have to do is find and reassemble a magic bracelet and redirect its errant powers. A very atmospheric game.

ATMOSPHERE	5/5	INTERACTION	4/5
CHALLENGE	5/5	VALUE VERDICT	4/5

Knightorc**£19.95 • Level 9 • 0934 814450 • All PCWs**

You are an orc in this typical Level 9 adventure by the name of Gridleguts. An addictive game with lots of action, plenty to explore and mind-bending puzzles.

ATMOSPHERE	5/5	INTERACTION	5/5
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GIANT KILLER is a mathematical adventure game which is used in thousands of British and Australian schools and is another 8000 Plus BEST BUY. As Jack - or Jackie - your task is to go to market to buy a pig. You'll be lucky to get one, of course, but if you can handle a calculator and map a maze you'll end up with a magic bean. Plant it and the rest of the adventure opens up. Puzzles gradually increase in difficulty covering National Curriculum investigations such as tessellations, prime numbers, topology, time and space, logic, etc. A great way to give your kids (and yourself) a maths challenge! Suits ages 10 to GCSE. PCW 8256, 8512, 9512, CPC (disc) £14.95, IBM PC £17.50.



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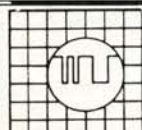
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ATMOSPHERE	5/5	INTERACTION	5/5
CHALLENGE	4/5	VALUE VERDICT	5/5

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ATMOSPHERE	5/5	INTERACTION	3/5
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An excellent adventure with dozens of superb screen illustrations, zany characters and a host of baffling puzzles. Will keep you entranced for hours.

ATMOSPHERE	5/5	INTERACTION	5/5
CHALLENGE	5/5	VALUE VERDICT	5/5

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Sequel to Countdown to Doom; you're back on the planet Doomawangera again to track down the ambassador Regina who has been kidnapped by some very unpleasant robots. Another text-only adventure game.

ATMOSPHERE	3/5	INTERACTION	2/5
CHALLENGE	4/5	VALUE VERDICT	4/5

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ATMOSPHERE 4/5	CHALLENGE 4/5
GRAPHICS 5/5	VALUE VERDICT 4/5

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A trilogy of intriguing adventure games. You are secret agent Kim Kimberley saving Snowball 9 from almost certain doom!

ATMOSPHERE	4/5	INTERACTION	4/5
CHALLENGE	4/5	VALUE VERDICT	4/5

Starglider

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A sophisticated shoot-'em-up with 3D vector graphics and a dose of strategy too. Your task is to save Novernia, helped by a complex playing guide.

GRAPHICS	5/5	ADDICTIVENESS	4/5
LASTING APPEAL	4/5	VALUE VERDICT	5/5

Steve Davis Snooker

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Surprisingly realistic simulation of both pool and snooker games - not as easy as it looks either! Foul shots, breaks and allows for spin, side, strength of shot. Good value, despite all the balls being greens!

GRAPHICS	2/5	ADDICTIVENESS	3/5
LASTING APPEAL	3/5	VALUE VERDICT	3/5

Strike Force Harrier

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A combat simulation of a Hawker Harrier, designed in conjunction with British Aerospace. Very detailed and realistic but you'll need to put in a few hours with the manual to get off the ground.

GRAPHICS	4/5	ADDICTIVENESS	3/5
LASTING APPEAL	3/5	VALUE VERDICT	3/5

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An excellent trilogy of time travel adventure which can be played in any order. Your task is to protect the history of the world from the destructive timelords - another very atmospheric game.

ATMOSPHERE	5/5	INTERACTION	4/5
CHALLENGE	5/5	VALUE VERDICT	5/5

Tetris

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You fit together bricks of various shapes that drop out of the sky at the bottom of the screen. The better the fit, the higher your score. One of those ridiculously simple ideas which is very addictive!

GRAPHICS	3/5	ADDICTIVENESS	5/5
LASTING APPEAL	4/5	VALUE VERDICT	5/5

Tomahawk

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A sophisticated Apache helicopter flight simulator. Impressive cockpit view graphics as you engage in combat missions - can be used with a joystick too.

GRAPHICS	4/5	ADDICTIVENESS	3/5
LASTING APPEAL	4/5	VALUE VERDICT	4/5

UK Trivia Treasure Hunt

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Pit your wits against the program in this carefully planned game. The quest for success is tricky; correct answers take you to various locations nationwide.

ATMOSPHERE	3/5	GRAPHICS	1/5
CHALLENGE	3/5	INTERACTION	2/5

Ultimate Quiz

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Ten quizzes on topics as diverse as the Highway Code and the Italian language. Clean screens and an easy to use program make Ultimate Quiz excellent entertainment and good value for money too.

GRAPHICS	5/5	CHALLENGE	4/5
LASTING APPEAL	3/5	VALUE VERDICT	5/5

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In Witch Hunt, you have been changed from an evil scheming rotter into a positively charming person - and you are not at all happy about it. To be returned to your former state, you have to gather the ingredients to give to the warty witch who can convert you back.

ATMOSPHERE	3/5	ADDICTIVENESS	3/5
CHALLENGE	4/5	VALUE VERDICT	10/15

World of Soccer

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A soccer management simulation game; you select squads of players for your international team and guide them through the European and World Cups. Gives a good insight into the kind of strategic thinking required.

ATMOSPHERE	4/5	INTERACTION	3/5
CHALLENGE	4/5	VALUE VERDICT	4/5

Yes Chancellor

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Become John Major for a day with this intense game/challenge written in BASIC. Whether it's budget balance or inflation control at stake, the Unions and the voters still have to be kept happy.

ATMOSPHERE 3/5	INTERACTION 3/5
CHALLENGE 4/5	VALUE VERDICT 4/5

NEXT MONTH

The guide continues with the categories of WORD PROCESSORS, ACCOUNTS/PAYROLL, UTILITIES and DTP. The month after will cover DATABASES, EDUCATIONAL SOFTWARE, COMMUNICATIONS and PROGRAMMING, and the month after that it's back to this month's topics.

Our intention is to keep publishing the three parts of the guide in rotation, updating it each month to include all new products. If you would like to see other sections of the guide, back issues of 8000 Plus are available at £1.75 each.

Meanwhile, if you are aware of any significant errors or omissions in the file as published, please let us know. We intend to maintain it as THE authoritative guide to PCW software.

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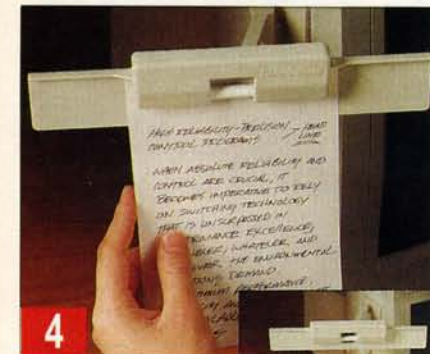


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POOLSMaster

(Formerly 'Pools Predictor' by Conwen Computer Systems)
 The Computer Football Pools Predictor

The amazing POOLSMaster program is by far the best Pools Predictor we have ever seen. In just 10 weeks of trying this program ourselves, we won no less than 12 dividends, the largest being nearly £300. Mr F. C. Hammond from Essex won nearly £10,000.00 in just 10 weeks. In his own words 'It's a licence to print money'.

POOLSMaster is simple to use and requires only that you keep the league tables up to date using your usual newspaper.

The result of many years research into the Football Pools by the programmer Martin Evans of C.C.S., the program is a masterpiece of expertise, and is simplicity itself to use.

- Predicts Homes, Aways and Draws
- No fiddly typing in of teams names etc and no redundant databases.
- Instant read-out or Hardcopy if you have a printer.
- Uses scientific formula based on recent form home and away, league position, goals scored etc. It has long been realised that certain combinations of these factors return a much higher than average of draws than the laws of average would expect. POOLSMaster looks for these factors and analyses their significance to give you the best possible chance of a win.
- Also has a 'Sequence Predictor' option. Many people believe that certain numbers on the coupon come up more often than others, and over a season patterns do seem to develop. The program analyses these patterns and predicts the numbers most likely to come up next. Certainly more scientific than sticking a pin in, or family birthdays etc.

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THE GRAPHOLOGIST

This program is a must for anyone interested in analysing their handwriting, or analysing other peoples. It is also very useful for analysing prospective employees handwriting. To use the program, a sample of handwriting is obtained, preferably in ink. From the main menu of the program you will be prompted and guided to examine each detail of the sample. You will then be taken through deeper and deeper sets of sub menus, all prompting you for relevant details of the writing, and the points to watch for, and add to the file if applicable.

Upon completion you are left with a disk file up to 15 pages long (depending on the depth of detail you choose), this file can then be edited within your word processor to produce a full report for the writer.

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The text within THE GRAPHOLOGIST was researched and written by a top London graphologist/criminologist James Woodward. The software was written by Martin Evans our consultant software writer.

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- Entries can be edited or deleted at any time
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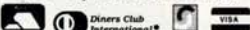
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POSTSCRIPT

Welcome to our Postscript pages, the spot in the magazine where you have your say ...

Your letters continue to pour into the office by their sack loads; we're always pleased to read your comments on past issues and your suggestions for future ones. So if you've got praise to pass on or criticism to air, don't keep it under your hat – share it with the rest of us.

After all, a problem posed in Postscript is a problem solved. So carry on sending your letters to Postscript, 8000 Plus, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

Blot on the landscape

Your article on ribbon refurbishment in the September issue already looks set to save everybody at least the cost of buying a copy of your excellent magazine each month. The ribbon reinkers had better drop their prices or go out of business!

May I suggest one thing (you are welcome to publish this tip): instead of using a toothbrush to BRUSH the ink on from the ink pad it is better to use the back of the toothbrush to PRESS the ink onto the ribbon. Brushing is also liable to reduce ribbon life through its abrasive effect. I also find the ribbon ink used to reink ribbon reinking machines a little too viscous for stamp pads. Stamp pad ink is not quite so lasting but far easier to apply.

Paul Eisler, London

8000 Plus: *Thanks for the support – and the tip. Your comments about the toothbrush and ink approach may well be valid. All we can say here is that we've not heard of – or indeed suffered – any ill effects as a result of this rather unorthodox solution.*

Maintenance agreement

8000 Plus has long been renowned for its articles on software and it was a most pleasant surprise to open the August issue and find an excellent article involving some of the PCW hardware also. The article on cleaning the keyboard was superb with easy-to-follow informative text and marvellous illustrations.

Now that you've started the ball rolling could we please have more hard-

ware articles on such as the PCW printer in general and the printhead in particular?

8000 Plus is the best.

John O'Sullivan, High Wycombe

Keep it clean

The keyboard of my Amstrad 8526 had badly sticking keys causing me much irritation and frustration until I received the August Issue 47 of the 8000 Plus. I followed, with much trepidation, the instructions given in the article "Living Legends".

The result was an unequivocal success.

I now have a keyboard which works as good as new. Well done 8000 Plus. NOW – HOW DO I CLEAN MY 8256 DOT MATRIX PRINTER?

M J Calver, Crawley

8000 Plus: *Well, it's funny you should say that. In next month's issue, we will be showing you the easy way to boost the performance of your dot matrix printer with a fully-illustrated, step by step overhaul guide.*

All clear

Many thanks for the generous appraisal of the ProScan system in the September issue. We have had a few queries arising out of the review, and I think it might be worth clarifying a couple of points which were perhaps not made as clearly as they might have been:

1: ProScan runs on ALL PCWs, the only limitation being that you cannot print graphics on the 9512's daisy-wheel printer.

2: You do NOT need Flipper2+ to use

ProScan. As with MicroDesign2, Flipper2+ can only be used with ProScan on a PCW which has a RAM expansion pack (SCA or Isenstein) providing a total of more than 512K of RAM.

3: The printing routines in ProScan are capable of producing higher-resolution printouts than MicroDesign2 (or any other PCW software) can generate. There are substantial improvements for the PCW printer, and 24-pin, Deskjet and laser printers.

4: The Recommended Retail Price is actually £179.95.

Finally, I should like to point out that the switches on the scanning head, which were so mercilessly criticised by your reviewer for being too small, have been certified as officially Big Enough by my Auntie Doris, notwithstanding short-sightedness and a touch of arthritis: I think it should be pointed out to Mr Smith that size isn't everything, and that it's what you do with them that really counts.

Nik Holmes, Creative Technology

8000 Plus: *Thanks for your letter, Nik. For those of you who have just come in and would like to see Creative's revolutionary handscanner in action – undergoing both the dot matrix and deskjet treatment – turn to our DeskJet Plus feature on page 46. Prepare, as they say, to be seriously amazed.*

Rising damp

Lest any of your readers adopt my procedure of putting their PCW keyboard under the tap (my letter September 8000 Plus) I should hasten to say that I was referring to the top section only, containing the keys, and not the entire keyboard including the printed circuit board as your comments seem to have implied.

Nevertheless, having said that, examination of the printed circuit reveals no components that would be harmed by a quick rinse if necessary, providing it is dried quickly and thoroughly. I say that as one who has had many years of experience with electronic equipment. The membrane I am not so sure about however, but a gentle wipe with a damp sponge seems to have caused no problems in my case.

With a coffee-sodden keyboard there would seem to be no alternative but to throw it away. Desperate situations call for desperate measures! Maybe I'll hose the console down next, but on second thoughts we have a hosepipe ban and I wouldn't want to fall foul of the Water Co.

In conclusion, may I say that I have subscribed to 8000 Plus since Issue 1 and rarely a month goes by without my learning something new.

S T Payne, Great Missenden

8000 Plus: *Throwing it away is definitely too drastic a measure! Just rest the keyboard upside down for a while to*

let all the moisture drain out of it. We don't unfortunately know of anyone who is still supplying those protective film coverings for PCW keyboards which used to fit snugly over the tops of the keys so that you could type through them. But if you want to be really armed against any sort of liquid threat, you could always try that well-known homespun trick of covering your keys with ordinary kitchen cling-film; it will perform much the same job with equal efficiency.

Bleepin' 'eck

I am writing on behalf of my dog Kye. He wishes to know how to stop the bleep on the PCW8512 when using LocoScript 2 (when I make a mistake).

The bleep noise affects the dog so much, he shakes violently all the time even when I go into the computer room now.



"THIS'LL FIX THAT DOG..."

Is there any way I can stop the bleep without invalidating my guarantee?

As you can see this is hand written, so please help so I can go back to using my machine.

J A Stevenson, Plymouth

8000 Plus: Yes, there is a way to do it. And if you turn to page 67 of our February issue (number 41) you'll find out exactly how to do it under the heading Give me a buzz.

Howard's way

I'm writing in response to your "Print Problems" tip off in the September issue. Dr Pritchard's letter didn't give the full story regarding printing of the Citizen Swift 24.

LocoScript can print in two ways on the Swift 24 – using the Swift's native characters and using LocoScript's

download characters. When using the native characters, both draft and NLQ printing in all pitches are fully supported, but only a small proportion of LocoScript's large range of characters (no Russian, for example).

When using the download characters, LocoScript needs to drive the printer effectively in PS, but proportionally spaced characters are only supported in NLQ mode. Consequently, in draft mode for pitches other than 10, LocoScript has to adjust the position before printing each individual character – with the resulting performance problem Dr Pritchard has noticed.

In fact on the Swift 24, in common with some other low-cost 24 pin printers, the position is slightly worse due to the small size of its internal memory. The printer stores up all the moves and characters until the memory is full, then prints the line so far, and starts again. So, whilst other printers operate with the same restriction on PS widths in draft using download characters, the impact on performance isn't as bad as on the Swift 24.

Howard Fisher, Dorking

8000 Plus: Thanks Howard.

Pawn shop

In response to Richard Whiteley's letter in issue 48, regarding Magnetic Scrolls'/Rainbird adventure game "The Pawn". He might like to know that a company who advertise in 8000 Plus called Special Reserve (page 58 in the September issue) sell all Rainbird games at reduced prices, as well as solution books. Joining Special Reserve costs £5 annually, and Official Secrets costs £27.99 to join but this will include The Pawn and Myth in membership.

C Walker, Wigan

8000 Plus: Ah, yes, so they do. Unfortunately, it appears that you can't buy The Pawn (RRP £24.95) from Special Reserve (0279 600204) unless you also become a member. Their annual membership fee is now £6. The good news is, however, that, if you pay that membership fee, you can get the game at a considerable discount – £10.49 to be exact.

Sudden death

I would welcome some advice on two separate PCW problems:-

On some occasions, but not always, when my new PCW 8512 is running it causes so much radio interference on the FM band that portable sets (with the usual rod aerials), whether running on mains or battery, are virtually unusable anywhere in the house, much to the annoyance of my wife. Only our fixed main set which has a loft aerial seems relatively unaffected.

The other problem has increased in frequency over the last few months. I

can only describe it as a complete lock-up. In the middle of working, for no obvious reason, everything stops. The screen shows nothing abnormal but there is no response to any key whatsoever. At first I thought it was associated with operation of certain specific keys, but it has since become obvious that this is not so. The only remedy is to withdraw the discs, switch off and then start again. Of course all the session's work has been lost and on one alarming occasion the lock-up left a drive motor running.

Can you or any reader offer any explanation and remedy for these problems please?

G R Weddell, Weybridge

8000 Plus: We've heard about this FM radio interference before from a number of our readers. Short of asking your wife to listen to her favourite radio programs on medium wave (not a proposal she's likely to greet with great enthusiasm), your only alternative is to wire up your radio to an external aerial – like your TV. These cost about £40-odd quid and should be available from your local Dixons branch.

As for the frequent crashes of your PCW – hmm, most strange. Our obvious advice would be to check your power supply. But then again, if power surges were at fault, you'd probably have seen some very strange things appearing from nowhere on the screen. We're afraid that it's more likely to be a memory chip fault of some kind.

On the move

With my work increasingly taking me away from my trusty PCW8512 for long periods, I am contemplating buying a portable machine to use in tandem with my Amstrad.

What I want is a machine for word processing only that is reasonably light, reliable, inexpensive, but, above all, that makes it as simple as possible to transfer files across to the PCW, so that I can tidy them up and print them.

It occurs to me that with the advent of LocoScript-PC the IBM-compatible portables now look a very appealing prospect, with the added benefit of a familiar word-processing package. I would be grateful for your current advice as to what machine might suit me best, and what would be involved in linking it up to my PCW.

Thanks for a continuing excellent magazine.

Michael M Scott, Edinburgh

8000 Plus: We would automatically recommend Microwriter's Agenda which we first looked at way back in our January issue. It's light, it's slim, it's easy to use and you can learn a special short-hand way of touch-typing so that you're not forced to stumble your way stiltedly across an alphabetically ordered keypad.

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All screen work is done graphically - and hence we offer unique panel, box, and ruled line options. Choose the line spacing at pixel resolution - you will be amazed how much clearer 9-pixel lines are than the usual 8-pixels. (Study the picture.) And all this faster than CP/M normally lets you paint the screen! PCW printer functions, under menu control, are provided.

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C8008	Epson	FX80	100cps 40x10 80col	Print page
C8009	Epson	FX80	100cps 40x10 80col	Print page
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C8014	Epson	FX80	100cps 40x10 80col	Print page
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C8016	Epson	FX80	100cps 40x10 80col	Print page
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You can bank on it

I wonder if you can help me about something I would like to know concerning SCA memory expansion. a) In issue 40 of your magazine it was written that "the RAMPAC has provision for a further one megabyte to occupy the maximum addressable two megabytes". Now I read another reference to that in August issue (page 37 - FOREWORD ad). How can I get that extra one megabyte? Is it a matter of buying two extra Rampacs to connect the original one? b) When SCA Rampac became available I have one Isenstein Ramcard already fitted to one of my machines. Is it possible to increase that machine memory by installing one of your units? If not, is there any other way of doing so? Now I have another matter to which I need your help. When I had notice of your magazine about one year had passed since its first number, therefore I have not the first seven numbers as well as Issue 13, which are already sold out. Would it be possible that you insert in your pages that I would gladly be ready to buy them second hand in case there is somebody to sell me them?

Hippolito da Silva, Amadora

8000 Plus: Well, Mr da Silva, it's a long story. Accessing the maximum available 2 megabytes by piggy-backing 3 8512 Rampacs onto the PCW 8512 expansion port is not a practice that SCA recommend. The maximum number of Pacs they've piggy-backed is two. They advise you, on the other hand, to piggy-back two 768K Pacs to achieve the full 2 meg potential. The good news is that if you want to upgrade an existing 512K Pac to 768K, SCA will only charge you £34.99 (all inclusive).

As for your second question, I'm afraid SCA RamPacs and the Isenstein Ramcard are completely incompatible.

Back issues of 8000 Plus are available from our Somerton office (0458 74011) at a price of £2 each.

That's not the spirit

I read your news item "That's the Spirit" (July) with amusement. My concern however is that there are some people who on the flimsiest of evidence take such things seriously.

Writing a program to converse with the spirits is child's play, if you restrict all output to "Yes" or "No", and all input to questions requiring one of those two answers. For any question about a future event there is a fifty per cent chance of getting a "correct" answer. To

gain a reputation for accurate predictions, one need only publicise the "correct" answers and discard the others.

I trust that 8000 Plus software purchasers are too sophisticated to be fooled by this typical exploitation of human hopes and fears.

David Simpson, Lusaka

8000 Plus: Yes, Ken Limage's spirits were rather offended by the publicity they received in the following month's Case in Point (Seance and Sensibility, issue 47). He phoned us to say that they were giving him no end of a hard time as a result of his decision to 'go public' on the whole affair ...

The price isn't right

Thank you for your review of our Pattern Puzzles in the August issue of 8000 Plus. I have, however, two gripes: firstly, the price for the PCW version is £13.60 (although at present we are giving an introductory offer price of £11.50). Secondly, it is possible to quit each game and return to the menu by pressing 'Q' or 'q': this is in fact shown in the manual both in the general section and at the end of the description of each puzzle. Can you print a correction?

H Tottenham, Romsey

8000 Plus: It shall be done.

Speechless

I seem to remember that a company called SM Engineering makes a speech synthesiser suitable for the PCW. I believe your excellent magazine reviewed it some time ago.

I wish to write a simple wordprocessor with speech output for my blind son but I cannot find the address or phone number of the company anywhere.

Can you help?

Dr Clive A Long, Bishopsteignton

8000 Plus: SM Engineering can be located at St George's, Lion Hill, Stone Cross, Pevensey, East Sussex BN24 5ED and contacted on 0323 766262. The synthesiser (reviewed in last January's issue) currently costs £49.95 all inclusive although Steve Marks from SM Engineering was anxious to point out that it won't work, as yet, with the PCW 9512.

Style council

We are all aware that the PCW is an excellent tool for amateur and professional writers alike, but could you tell me if any kind of 'Style Analyser' is available for our beloved machines.

I find it hard to believe why someone hasn't thought of developing such an item, seeing many PCW users originally purchased their machines for word

processing usage.

There are grammar and style analysers available for the PC and MAC, isn't it about time we had this privilege too? I know it's been said many times before, but thanks for an excellent entertaining and informative magazine.

Graham Hadlington, Grimsby

8000 Plus: Grammatik (£35 plus VAT) from Optronics (081 892 8455) is the only style analyser available for the PCW. (See our Feb 87 review of it). They've only got 10 copies available though - so don't hang around.

Small is beautiful

A PCW virtue that is not commonly recognized is its small overall size and weight in comparison with other machines (while still providing a good size of screen and keyboard). This occurred to me recently when I borrowed an Amstrad PC1640 and Epson printer for a while. Just picking up and transporting the equipment proved to be an herculean task. No way would it fit the computer desk that fits neatly into the corner of one of my rooms. Permanent installation would have needed a house extension!

I now have the 8000 Plus carrying case. This wraps it up into quite a neat package. The weight is no greater than that of most laptop machines.

So to anyone contemplating 'upgrading' from PCW, get out the tape measure first and carefully weigh up all the ramifications of these differences.

Reg Osborne, Pitton, Salisbury

8000 Plus: So exactly what sort of commission are you on from Amstrad, Mr Osborne? Those all-in-one cases are very convenient for occasional transport of your PCW, but I wouldn't fancy going for a five-mile hike with one.



"THE MEN HAVE ARRIVED TO MOVE YOUR PC DEAR ..."

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Competition

Bored of cramped quarters? Spot the 10 differences below to win yourself a whole lot of extra space!

Fed up of constantly having to clear your PCW and all your papers off the dining room table every time the family wants to sit down and eat? If that scenario sounds vaguely familiar to you, it may well be that you could benefit from one of the ergonomically-designed workstations – tailor-made, it has to be said, for PCW owner comfort – that we are giving away as prizes to the winners of this month's competition.

The Com-Stax Stand is 98cm tall and 41cm wide and has been designed with the comfort of the user uppermost in the minds of the creators. The keyboard and monitor sit comfortably at the right height and angle while the printer occupies the space on top of the monitor. Suitable slots have been provided at the back of the stand to accommodate any interface leads which you're using. The 9512 stand has been customised accordingly.

The unit normally retails at £44.95 and is available in a choice of three colours: grey, white or black. It will arrive on your front door mat as a flat pack kit which you can easily assemble in a matter of minutes. The good news is that we've got 10 of these stands to give away, while the five lucky runners-up stand to win one of these Com-Stax matching sidedesks (pictured inset) which can accommodate a second



And there we have it: 10 Com-Stax stands (above) must go, along with 5 side desks (715cm tall by 610 wide) for the runners-up.

printer, say, or disc box together with any other peripheral equipment you use.

All you have to do is spot the 10 differences between the two almost identical sketches below and send in your answers (on the back of a postcard, please) to: Com-Stax Competition, 8000 Plus, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. All entries must be in by Wednesday, 24th October. Don't forget to tell us which model you have and which colour you would prefer.



For August competition winners, turn to page 8

NEXT MONTH!

Snap happy

Sometimes producing a lively, interesting article just isn't enough. It can often take a little more than mere words to catch an editor's eye and persuade him or her that your work is really worth publishing. Supply good, illustrative back-up for your text in the form of clear, professional-looking photographs, and the battle is half won. So if you would like the photographs you take to be to your credit rather than your detriment, read next month's issue to find out what every self-respecting journalist should know about being his or her own photographer.

How to clean your printer

Want to know how you can perk up your printer without paying the professionals a fortune to do it for you? Next month, we put together a fool-proof, fully-illustrated, step by step guide to DIY PCW printer maintenance. If you want to save yourself a bob or two, don't miss it.

Problem solved

In the second of our regular LocoScript 2 surgeries, Liz Bruce will be looking at the most frequent problems suffered by novice Scripters when they first begin using LocoScript's many different templates and groups. Never mind a different template for each group, what are they and where can they be found? If you still think that a group is nothing more than a band of musicians, address your Loco queries to the usual address. Liz treats you to some expert advice in our next month's issue.

Security measures

We're pleased to announce that next month we will be reviewing a hitherto secret software project that is being directly marketed by the cancer research charity, BACUP. Called, not surprisingly, BACKUP, it is, say its creators, an End-of-Day disc to complement the LocoScript Start-of-Day disc. It allows you to keep up to the minute back-ups of your files as you work – so there will no longer be any excuses for those of you who manage to lose – irretrievably – valuable data.

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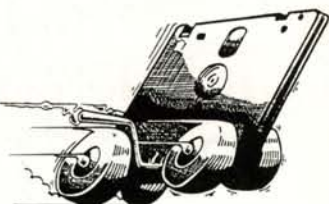
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